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What's life all about? : A key for those who ask the question

BOOKS BY BERTHA CONDÉ

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURING

A WAY TO PEACE, HEALTH, AND POWER

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE MAKING OF A CHRISTIAN

THE BUSINESS OF BEING A FRIEND

What's Life All About?

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What's Life All About?

A Key for Those Who Ask the Question

By

Bertha Condé

Author of "The Human Element in the Making of a Christian," "A Way to Peace, Health, and Power," etc.

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A

TO

MY FRIEND

B. G.

PARTNER IN LIFE'S GROWING PAINS
THROUGH WHICH
THE REALITY OF GOD'S CARE AND MIRACLES
OF HIS DELIVERANCE
HAVE BEEN PROVED, TIMES WITHOUT NUMBER

Introduction

Among thousands of young men and women throughout the country who have phrased the religious question in which they are most interested, the great majority have asked, "What's life all about?" It is in answer to these potential leaders of to-morrow that this book is written.

Nothing stirs me more than the honest, inquiring search of youth for the real truth, shorn of tradition, which will pull them with its idealism and give a worth-while meaning to life. Most of our scientific research has brought us to the frontier of the material world and deals with unseen forces which confer upon humanity the power for seemingly miraculous achievement, never dreamed of by our forebears. This naturally awakens a curiosity about the possibilities of spiritual laws and principles, through which the human personality may increase its power to deal with a universe of incredible spaciousness; and to dominate increasingly the environment of life. The mere quoting of religious dogma, or assumption of truth from past ages, is not convincing to the truth-seekers of to-day. They demand that historic

positions be examined in the light of the discoveries of this present age.

I have tried to sketch in these brief chapters the rational way in which the discoveries of modern science confirm the laws of life embodied in that unique personality of Jesus, which challenges the thinking world more to-day than ever before. I do not pretend to cover the whole horizon of thought, but am trying merely to provide a key which will open at least a few doors of the House of Life enclosing infinite future surprises for those of us who are willing to adventure.

It is imperative for the Church and the individual to face frankly and courageously such research into the possibilities of law in the spiritual realm. Silence at this time, or comfortable satisfaction with inherited convictions, will sooner or later swamp us in the threatening flood of atheism which is the natural outgrowth of material idolatry and animalistic urge. The average small, superficial mind is reduced to a cynical unbelief because of loud-voiced, materialistic leaders. Other thousands are baffled but eager to find the bridge between the present day and the spiritual To-morrow. Controversies over pet convictions are beside the mark in the presence of such a challenge as now faces those for whom the God of Jesus has been the supreme working hypothesis for life.

There is no alternative in this generation but to discover to-day's reason for yesterday's faith. Every sincere and intelligent thinker is called upon to give time to this spiritual research; not only for the cause of the God of love, but for their own sakes, and the shepherding of those restless, searching folk all over the world who crave the real truth.

The conditions to-day recall vividly the spiritual discernment that came to the prophet Ezekiel, who saw and pictured the sorrow of God over the children of men. "Here is what the Lord the Eternal says: 'Woe to the shepherds who have fed none but themselves! Ought not shepherds to feed their flock? . . . You never put strength into the weak, you never healed the sickly, you never bandaged the cripples, you never recovered those who had been driven away, you never looked for those who were lost. . . . So my flock has been scattered . . . and it has been devoured by all the wild beasts.' . . . Hear then what the Lord the Eternal says: . . . 'I myself, I will search for my flock and look for them. . . . As a shepherd looks for his flock on the day when his sheep have been scattered, so will I search for my flock and bring them safe from all places whither they have been scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.' "

Surely the spiritual obligation of us all who

know our God calls us to do His will and carry out His purpose for this generation in which we are responsible as interpreters of the meaning of life.

BERTHA CONDÉ.

New York City,
March 26, 1930.

Acknowledgments

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I

"O Thou transcendent
nameless, the fibre and the breath,
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them
Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the loving,
Thou moral, spiritual fountain—affection's source—thou reservoir.
(O pensive soul of me—O thirst unsatisfied—waitest not there?
Waitest not haply for us somewhere the Comrade perfect?)
The pulse—the motive of the stars, suns, systems
That, circling, move in order, safe, harmonious,
Athwart the shapeless vastnesses of space.
How should I think, how breathe a single breath, how speak, if out of myself
I could not launch to those superior universes?
Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
At Nature and its wonders, Time, Space, and Death;
But that I, turning, call to thee, O soul, thou actual Me;
And lo, thou gently mastered the orbs,
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
And fillest, swellest full, the vastnesses of Space."

FROM "PASSAGE TO INDIA,"
BY WALT WHITMAN.

CHAPTER I

WHAT WE ARE

When Plato voiced that imperial counsel, "Know thyself," more than two thousand years ago, his advice was good, but he failed to show us practically how to carry out this prodigious task. Men have been studying, philosophizing, and delving through the centuries in the laboratories of every known science; but the human spirit is ever mysterious, even to itself.

This perpetually interesting subject was never more engrossing than to-day. On every hand eager youth is trying to understand itself and life; and asks, "Why am I here? What is life all about?" A deluge of books full of human theories floods the market, some near and some far-sighted; scientific books trace with meticulous care the causes of phenomena and the discoveries of forces that release huge possibilities and powers. Astronomers, peering into the vastness of space, say there are certainly five thousand million stars and there may be many more. Other scientists looking at the world microscopically tell us that even in an invisible atom there are whirling universes of electrons and protons.

The universe to-day has dimensions that make the mind reel, and deepen the wonder about life. Most books are so far ahead of us in research and so high-brow in phraseology that the average man or woman who must spend most of the day working for a simple living cannot understand them. All that most of us feel is the increasing awareness of mystery without and within, and we long to find some solid rock of understanding that will help us to know ourselves, and know how to live in a realm of truth instead of vain delusion. We do not want to be so stupidly ignorant that we voice the poet's lament when it is too late:

> "For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
> The saddest are these: 'It might have been!' "

It is for the ordinary folk, who are mystified, fearful, cynical, or depressed by modern conditions, that this book is written. We are not without hope; and out of the maze of opinions there are certain great realities which will lead us by a sure trail to the goal of our desire. The footprints of countless heroic spirits are along the way, and we have only to follow them to find that they discovered the key to life and lived so radiantly and joyously that history can never forget them. If any one has the courage to prove, by an actual test of experience, the scientific principles of victorious personality, his

days on earth will go from strength to strength until all haunting fears vanish like mists before the sun. He will "greet the future with a shout."

Well, who am I? and who are you? We cannot be defined in one sentence. As one writer says, "The pronoun 'I' is a mystery of mysteries. Our self-knowledge is not the measure of what we are." At best we can only describe ourselves from different characteristics we possess and from certain relationships. To a biologist we are one thing, to a psychologist another; to a philosopher we are quite different, and to our friends something else quite unique. Let us begin where Descartes began, "I think, therefore I am." Each of us is a self-conscious being with the power to think, to feel, and to do. Unlike lower animals we can think back into the past, and out into the future. We can evaluate the thoughts of others and come to intellectual conclusions by a process of logical sequence. We can feel not only bodily sensations, but love for our friends, and an emotional thrill in the presence of the sheer beauty of a sunset or symphony. Or it may take the form of sympathy for suffering, or delight in achievement. We can also will to create a book, a picture, a house, or a garden; or carry out into concrete reality a business organization or a re-making of some part of the social order. It is this three-fold

capacity that makes us persons instead of mere animals. Even several thousand years ago, in the Sanskrit *Panchatantra,* the peculiar human qualities were sensed and expressed in the following lines, as translated by Arthur W. Ryder:

"For if there be no mind
Debating good and ill,
Or if religion send
No challenge to the will;
If only greed be there
For some matinal feast,
Here draw a line between
The man-beast and the beast."

We are also conscious of having not only a body, but a mind and a soul. The mind is greater and different from the physical brain. Bergson in his discussion on mind-energy says, "There is infinitely more in human consciousness than in the corresponding brain. . . . Mind overflows the brain on all sides." Pascal describes the greatness of the mind, which has the power to think, when he says, "Not from space must I seek my dignity but from the ruling of my thought. I should have no more dignity if I possessed whole worlds. By space the universe encompasses and swallows me as an atom; by *thought* I encompass it."

Above all there is a consciousness of a self, or soul, which is the most important part of us. It makes our choices and thus helps to shape our

destiny. Some who are reading this sentence may challenge it because some of our modern psychologists have different opinions. Some assert that our personality is only a piece of complex mechanism which is rigidly determined by laws. Others assert that this self, or soul, consists only of a bundle of different impulses, sentiments, emotions, and complexes, and like the fate of poor Humpty Dumpty—"All the King's horses and all the King's men could not put Humpty Dumpty together again." Again, some of the behavioristic group deny that there is purpose or meaning in what we choose to do; that it is a mere process of unconscious reactions. These opinions, however, are contradicted by some of our greatest scholars. Professor James Y. Simpson, the great Scottish biologist, in speaking of man's capacity for awareness says, "Man's general awareness has become awareness of self." And no less an authority than Doctor Hinkle, the leading psychoanalyst, says in her book *The Re-creating of the Individual,* "We are finally face to face with the recognition . . . that we actually possess not only the possibilities but the creative capacity for the achievement of a higher consciousness and more abundant life. . . . It is a fact which psychoanalysis reveals definitely and unmistakably that the actual disturbance of the individual to-day is involved with the problem of

the soul." Beside all this, each of us is sure that he has a self, or soul, that he actually knows. As the small boy said when questioned about his being really hungry, "I have inside information." My soul may be indescribable but it is really there within me; and it makes itself heard, in no uncertain tones, in the varied crises of life. The intuition of the Hebrew writer was true when he said, "Keep thy soul with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

The second reality about us is that our conscious self which thinks, feels, and acts, has a capacity for relationships. We are related to the outside world, to our inner life, and to the inner life of others. The push and pull of these conflicting relationships create all our problems and pains, also our possibilities and peace. Think of the limitless growth of soul that can come to us from nature. Its variety, its beauty, its hidden secrets, its spaciousness, draw out greater and greater capacities for growth and the full realization of self. Charles Darwin once exclaimed, "No man can stand in the tropic forests without feeling that they are temples filled with the various productions of the God of nature and that there is more in man than the breath of his body." And the poet Wordsworth, that great lover of nature, sings,

"And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils."

Peculiarly important is the relation of the soul to the impulses, desires, and emotions of the inner life. They are our inheritance out of the great unconscious life behind us and the conscious soul in us cannot escape relations with them. If we hold them in control and unify them in loyalty to some great and worthy ideal, we have peace and power. If we do not unify these conflicting emotions, the peace of our whole personality departs, and the warring impulses bring endless trouble in our physical and mental life. It is these conflicts that make us cynical and doubtful about the meaning and value of life. My soul can grow only by relating all my inner life to some worthwhile goal. In his book *Man and the Universe,* Sir Oliver Lodge, the British scientist, observes, "Soul means that mysterious principle of regulation and control which is the characteristic of life." And from the point of view of biology, Professor Simpson, in his book on *Man and the Attainment of Immortality,* says, "The Dawn of the age of Reason is indicated by the gradual appreciation by man that he has a growing power to control his instincts and emotions by his intelligence and that he is most distinctly man when he does so."

Of immense importance also is the relation of my soul to other souls. Among all the millions of people there are not two precisely alike.

There is something to learn from every one of them. Everything we have and do in life is possible because of the cooperation of other people. The simplest meal we eat is possible only because of scores of people who worked, in relationship with us, in tilling the soil for wheat, fruit, and vegetables; in the making of dishes, tables, chairs, knives and forks. Truly, not one of us lives to himself alone. We are enmeshed in the give-and-take of all humanity and through it we grow to know the fuller meaning of life.

Supreme over all is the possible relation with "The Great Soul of the World," as Carlyle puts it; that fountain of life which is the source of life and the supply from which my soul and every other soul springs. People have different names for this Great Soul. Many name it God; some call it Radiant Energy; others, the World Life. The name is not as important, however, as this inference; namely, that if I am a self-conscious Soul, the source that created me must be at least all that I am. As Sir Oliver Lodge puts it, "God is a Being, not less than personal, however much more than personal He may be." This conclusion is also voiced by a philosophical scholar who recently wrote, "Now we can see as objective fact, evidences of the stirring of the human soul throughout the ages to enter into relationship with that Power which, by its char-

acteristics revealed in the world powers, we are driven to think of as God. And just because we know ourselves as on the way toward complete personality, we cannot be content with anything less than a Personal God."

This conclusion is all the more reasonable when we realize that more and more scientific research is assuring us that this world is not material but spiritual; and that we ourselves are also spiritual. Doctor J. S. Haldane of Oxford University, speaking as a biologist, says, "The material world which has been taken for a world of blind mechanism is in reality the spiritual world seen very partially. . . . The only real world is the spiritual world." And Professor James Y. Simpson, who occupies the Chair of Natural Sciences at Edinburgh University, says that "there is no individual on the physical side of things—simply a physical stream providing, as the result of certain relations and activities of its parts, opportunities for the development of individuals; which if they are really individuals can only be so in some spiritual regard."

Unless we recognize our relationship to a God who is greater than we in all our qualities of personality, we are driven to egotism or despair. Egotism developed to an extreme unsettles the mind and breaks all normal relationships. "Who sees a great man in the mirror should consult an oculist," is the pithy saying

of a wise man. There are many, however, who have too keen a sense of humor to be egotists. They are aware of relative values and realize their own puny strength when pitted against some of the facts of life. Their intellectual bigness leads them to despair if they are blind to the reality of God. This is the attitude of a great thinker like Bertrand Russell, who paints the blackness of hopelessness in the following words: "We see, surrounding the narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human comradeship, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour. From the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge. All the loneliness of humanity amid hostile forces is concentrated upon the individual soul, which must struggle alone, with what of courage it can command, against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears." How futile is research and experience with the world, and people, and one's self, if they are obscured by the blackness of loneliness of spirit. Truly did St. Augustine exclaim "O God, Thou has made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee."

It is reassuring to turn to the testimony of an astronomer, Sir Francis Younghusband, who, in his recent book *Life in the Stars,* argues that "philosophy is against the view that the universe is a mere aggregate, a meaningless col-

lection of things, a purposeless swirl of events; and is in favor of the view that it is a coherent whole under definite direction." And he adds, "If we find the beauty of flowers, the love of mothers, the heroism of a Nelson, and the saintliness of a St. Francis here on this earth which has sprung from the sun, we can only assume that beauty and love, heroism and holiness, are not unique, but are characteristics of the universe as a whole." In other words, if all these qualities are human, the source from which they come must also have them in fulness.

Do you say that this is all too mysterious to be accepted as truth? We cannot banish mystery from the world. Every discovery of science opens up a larger and more mysterious universe. Even those powers we use, such as electricity, the wisest do not yet understand. And yet we use them in our daily life. There would be no progress from the candle to the electric bulb if we had not ventured forth knowing only in part. In the realm of God and religion we fare forth also knowing only in part. In his *Beliefs That Matter,* Doctor William Adams Brown says, "Besides the outer world of motion and form and number that can be mapped and weighed and measured, there is an inner realm of values and ideals to which religion gives access." And he goes on to say, "To conceive of the world as the scene of God's constant presence is not to empty life of its mystery. On

the contrary it brings us face to face with a deeper mystery. The religious experience is always an experience of wonder in the presence of mystery, the mystery at once baffling and fascinating, that religion calls 'God.' "

The call to research in the realm of religion is open to us all. Arthur J. Gossip puts the situation squarely when he says, "So far from religion being a dim and ghostlike thing that shrinks back into the twilight and fears to face the blaze of day, it is the only kind of knowledge that lies within the reach of every one. Any one can pray, and discover for himself whether it really works; any one who dares can trust in God and so determine by personal experiment whether he is the better for it or no." From his life in the trenches during the war Donald Hankey wrote, "Religion seems to me just betting your life there is a God." From this and endless other writers of human experience we might well, each one of us, face the question William D. Howells put into rythmic verse:

"If I lay waste and wither up with doubt
The blessed fields of heaven where once my faith
Possessed itself serenely safe from death;
If I deny the things past finding out,
Or if I orphan my own soul of One
That seemed a Father, and make void the place,
Within me where He dwelt in Power and Grace,
What do I gain by that I have undone?"

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II

"Man is tormented by divine things."
GEORGE SAND.

"Mystery is God's glory,
But a King's glory is to search out secrets."
PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

"To covet the truth is a very distinguished passion."
GEORGE SANTAYANA.

CHAPTER II

OUR INSATIABLE HUNGERS

"To covet the truth is a very distinguished passion," writes Santayana, one of the modern philosophers. It surely takes courage to face truth. Strange as it may seem, many people to-day seek the opiate of a distracting society life or business pressure in order to forget the haunting thoughts which cannot be downed permanently in the human heart. We do not have to live in ignorance these days. To understand oneself is the safest and sanest way to live and to get the most out of this world. There are many who assume that all truth is elusive and not to be found, simply because they have not found it. In Æsop's fables it was the tailless fox that advocated the disuse of tails. He was too proud to admit that his lack of a tail was abnormal and a personal limitation, and therefore sought to reduce all foxes to his level. It is a parable of human life. We hear people boasting in their ignorance as if their failure to find the truth were a sign of advanced research and cleverness on their part. We ought never to forget that truth is not grasped fully by any one mind; but is the composite result of all the light that has shone into the mind of man. The

fact that it persists in shining through the centuries ought to make us bravely humble when we find darkness instead of light in ourselves. The trouble is not with truth but with ourselves.

One of the greatest facts therefore that we dare not ignore is our past. It is called by psychoanalysts the "unconscious," which includes the instinctive activities and reactions which the race has experienced from the beginning. The long stream of human heredity has had much to do with us. Some of the most eminent biologists trace human life back 900,000 years from the evidences left on earth. In the light of this truth it is childish to say, as countless youth say to-day, that times have changed and everything is different, and that people who have lived for a little span of fifty years are hopelessly out of date. The contemptuous reference to the early Victorian age is laughable when one thinks of it in relation to a probable history of 900,000 years. And the solemn side of all this is that each of us is still influenced by that long past, and that we cannot detach ourselves from it even though we want to be wholly modern. There is a common bond of desire and longing which unites all humanity. Doctor Hinkle, in the introduction to Doctor Jung's book on the *Psychology of the Unconscious,* refers to Doctor G. Stanley Hall's comparison of the mind to "an iceberg floating in the ocean with one-eighth

visible above the water and seven-eighths below; the one-eighth above being that part called conscious, and the seven-eighths below that which we call the unconscious. The influence and controlling power of the unconscious desires over our thoughts and acts are in this relative proportion."

From this inherited "unconscious" come all our desires and instincts and impulses which fight for supremacy and keep the soul in conflict. The urge for self-preservation, the sex-urge, the herd instinct, the fear instinct, the acquisitive urge, the desire for self-assertion, and many other urges, battle on within us. They are just the same as they always have been though modern circumstances change their expression in certain respects.

Youth to-day has at least two advantages over the older generation. It has the soul of frankness and utter sincerity. There is nothing hidden that is not revealed, and the clear-eyed boy or girl to-day strikes terror to the generation of parents who often have been secretive and lived double lives, not daring to speak the truth to themselves. All hail to the youth who do not shrink from truth, unlovely, crass, or refined though it may be. They also are fearless and willing to adventure into the unknown regardless of consequences. Truth and courage will open up fabulous treasures *if* the adventurer is

willing to learn from the experience of the past, and be like a wise chemist who, from the formulas and reactions already known, discovers the new formula, rather than produce an explosion from hit or miss accidental combinations. The laws of life are as inexorable as the laws of chemistry or electricity. The greatest rewards come to those who use them with wisdom.

The distinguishing mark of personality, which separates it from the primitive animal instincts, is our capacity for aspiration and higher development through our mind and soul. William James, the psychologist, said, "The potentialities of development in the human soul are unfathomable." But it is ours to choose whether we will follow the higher or lower pull. There is something in us that makes it possible for us to resist the influence of our animal nature, and rise to heights where we may triumph. All of us have felt within us that inner yearning for a higher soul life. As Professor William H. Carruth phrases it,

"Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling, and surging in;
Come from the mystic ocean,
Whose rim no foot hath trod;
Some of us call it 'Longing,'
Others call it God.'"

Biologically, Professor Simpson assures us that the individual man may be independent of the physical aspects of environment because "the higher organisms gradually substitute internal for external stimuli, the former being in great part the summed results of previous experience of the latter." A young man when rebuked for his wild and uncontrolled life replied, "I follow my urges. It's a great life if you don't weaken." He did not have enough respect for his inner self. He did not have to be the victim of his baser urges, but had within him the capacity to be like St. George who, in the splendor of his youth, trampled on the dragon and held it down under his feet. A French writer describes the human situation when he asks, "Do you know what makes man the most suffering of all creatures? It is that he has one foot in the finite and the other in the infinite and that he is torn between two worlds."

And so the inner struggle goes on because of our capacity to enter into a higher plane of life. It is the infinite in us that will not let us rest content with a mere earthly existence. The Hebrew writer voices the real difference between man and dog when he says, "God hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the *World* [or Eternity, as one translation puts it] in the heart of man without which no man can find out the work that God maketh

from the beginning to the end." We are here for a purpose, and there is some reason, beyond the power of the laboratory to detect, why we have this infinite capacity for ideals and aspirations. We are in a moral world where personalities rather than things are of supreme importance. Kant, the great philosopher, said that "a moral world is a world where persons, individual persons, are treated as ends in themselves, and not as means or instruments to an end beyond themselves."

How remote this seems from much of life today! There is so much yielding to mere animal instincts, it is no wonder youth feels that idealism is an illusory dream. H. G. Wells says caustically, "Human society is the limited and legalized struggle of men and women to get the better of one another." Men use the infinite capacity of their minds to discover ways of being more animalistic in their power to devour one another. The great war was full of such demonstrations when ten million youth lay dead on the fields of Europe. Winston Churchill, former British minister of munitions, speaking of how the souls of the nations have given way to the lust for exploitation says, "It is possible —nay, certain that among the means which will next time be at their (the nations') disposal will be agencies and processes of destruction, wholesale, unlimited, and perhaps once launched, un-

controllable. Mankind has never been in this position before. Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, it has got into its hands for the first time, the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination. That is the point in human destinies to which all the glories and toils of men have at last led them."

What is the way of escape? There is only one way, and that is the way of religion, by which that highest human part of us which we call *soul,* is reinforced by the power of the beneficent God of the Universe. He made us for self-realization instead of self-destruction. It is no wonder that Voltaire exclaimed, "If there were no God, we would have to invent one to keep people sane." But life is a cooperative task between God and man! A boy may yearn for education, and the nation may provide the institution; but the boy has to work to absorb what has been provided. From the human side, as it is observed biologically, Vernon Kellogg says, "Future man may be consciously determined by man to-day. . . . Human evolution has been turned over to human kind itself to direct." From the realities of a religious experience one of the greatest leaders, St. Paul, writes, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." Life,

then, is a summons to an adventure with God if its higher values are to be realized.

The scientific picture of man as he is destined to be is drawn for us by Professor Simpson. In his book on *Man and the Attainment of Immortality,* he says that the whole process of life through the ages (reaching back more than 900,000 years) has been for "the development of a self-conscious individual who is free"; and that he gains freedom in two ways, "by an increasing control over his proximate environment" and "by a multiplicity of relationships." What could be a greater destiny! To be free, and freer as life goes on, because with the joy of greater powers to control our environment we uncover vast possibilities for human adventure; not for the purpose of exploiting and dominating other lives, but for acquiring a multiplicity of relationships with others for the unlimited enrichment of personality—this is something worth living for! This is a Godlike career! It forever lifts man above the animal plane of brute force and exploitation. Professor Tilroe, in his poem *Where Faith Begins,* voices the inevitable conclusion:

"This mortal man, I know as 'me';
My breath somewhere began;
Whence came my immortality,
The heritage of man?
I'd like to know;
I wish I had the brain to think it through.

And thus the mysteries multiply
To which my eye is dim;
My faith begins to mount on high,
And now it rests in Him.
I think I know;
I think I've found the brain that thinks it through."

It takes religion to understand the real meaning of our human life and its inner conflicts. It becomes real according to our sincerity. Professor Whitehead in his book *Religion in the Making* says, "Religion is force of belief cleansing the inward parts. For this reason the primary religious virtue is sincerity, a penetrating sincerity." This is what the prophet Jeremiah heard the still small voice of God saying to him, "Seek me and you shall find me; when you seek for me with all your heart, I will reveal myself to you." The insatiable hunger for God is part of our humanity. "In religion," says Ritschl, "man seeks assurance of his worth as a moral person in spite of the fact that he is a part of nature." And in the words of the psychologist Henry Nelson Wieman, "God is that aspect of the universe to which if a man adjusts himself he will attain the greatest good possible to human life."

Even those who own to their failure to find God have to reckon with this hunger for Him. "I miss Him greatly," writes a modern author, "but in spite of all my search I have never suc-

ceeded in finding Him, nor ever expect to." The secret of the failure lies in the last four words. He is not searching with all his heart; he has given up, although he owns to the hunger in the words, "I miss Him greatly." Other things have become more important than the quest for God. He needs the kind of faith in undiscovered realities that the modern chemist has. One of them who made a great discovery said to a friend, "I worked in the dark for fourteen years, but that is nothing in comparison with the joy of turning mystery into beneficent knowledge." Such a spirit is the spirit of faith which someone defines as "the organization of the whole life around an object that is desirable and the rallying of all the energies of life, active or latent, toward the realization of that object." The hungers of our life can be satisfied if we are willing to pay the price.

Doctor Herbert Willett of the University of Chicago sums up the rational experience of modern scientific scholarship in the following words: "To the eager and searching spirit He (God) is real and present. A universe without Him is as the blackness of darkness. It is easy to think that one is an unbeliever in deity, merely because he has ceased to have faith in the sort of God someone else has described. But to settle oneself calmly to the thought of a Godless world is a more serious proceeding. . . . In no

such forlorn universe does the man of insight live. He is aware that he cannot boast of large knowledge of deity, as earlier and bolder generations did. But somewhat he knows; and that somewhat is sufficient to serve him in the adventure of life. . . . He cannot gain his own consent to attempt the definition of the Infinite in lengthened categories, but is confident that he can make the language of Frederic Myers his own:

> 'Whoso hath felt the spirit of the Highest
> Cannot confound nor doubt him, nor deny;
> Yea, with one voice. O world, though thou deniest,
> Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.' "

"We believe in God," says Doctor Edmund Soper, "because it fits in better with all we know and feel about what is and ought to be than any other conclusion. It is a venture on the basis of what we know to be truest and noblest within ourselves."

The insatiable hunger for God, in Whom we live and move and have our being, is more real to us than the other hungers of our inner life. There are the common social hungers that are vivid to us because they are part of our experience and the very warp and woof of our manhood and womanhood. There is the primitive hunger for a mate, some companion who will complete our life and enable us to satisfy our

sex-instinct by creating a home and having the joy of children. Many in this generation sniff in disdain at this statement because something has entered life which has baffled this inner urge. The common breakdown of home life, the mating which brings only sorrow, disillusion, tragedy and separation, is such an ordinary experience that we become cynical about the value of such an ideal. Then, too, there is the gregarious instinct by which we long for friends who will understand our intellectual and spiritual ideals and bring us comradeship and the joys of sharing our discoveries and experiences. Here again we are often disappointed. Our friends misunderstand; they are unworthy of our trust; they may leave us lonely and despairing. To satisfy this hunger for relationships, we turn to the community and social clubs, and travel among other nations. We have desires to lead in the competition for social or business position, and in spite of novelty, change, and temporary success, we are still unsatisfied. One has only to look into the faces of the so-called prosperous people who have "achieved success" to realize their discontent, fatigue of spirit, and lack of buoyancy. Such lives are described by Doctor Walter Russell Bowie in one of his books as "a dizzy rotation around a central emptiness."

Why this baffling experience and inner despair? Because of the fact of sin. In his book

The New Temple, Johan Bojer defines sin as "the friction between our aspirations and our limitations." There are some men to-day who speak of sin as having vanished in the light of modern knowledge about ourselves. Some psychology breaks up the self into so many different elements and complexes that the thought of personality as a mechanism rather than a responsible soul has made the conception of sin absurd. The long history of mankind with its change and development makes the conflict between aspiration and limitation seem a natural condition of growth rather than a situation which the soul was meant to master. Then too when behavior has a physical as well as a mental basis, it is easy to find excuses for falling below our ideals. Nevertheless, from the point of view of biology, Professor Simpson asserts that "This missing the mark, the failure to advance by self-mastery as the result of a personal activity directed by that internal conscience or higher sensitivity or God-consciousness, which is the form which the urge of evolution henceforth assumes for man, is Sin." In other words, the fact that we can have the help of God for self-mastery makes us responsible for missing the mark. To see the ideal and yet be content with a lower plane of living is sin for any human being.

Another reason for the seeming ease with

which some moderns ignore the sense of sin which sooner or later will haunt our inner life is voiced by Doctor William Adams Brown. He says, "It is not so much that our modern age has lost the sense of sin as that we have developed a technic by which we are able to fasten it upon those whom we dislike, and of whom we disapprove—big business men for example, or wicked imperialists, or corrupt labor leaders. What we call the social gospel, originally designed to make the sense of sin more keen by extending it to new relations, is often used as a device for locating sin elsewhere than in ourselves."

Sin is also an energy that breaks relationships and defeats aspirations. One has only to experience with others the pain and suffering in present-day human life, to realize the terrors and horrors of this sin principle, which prostitutes all the idealism of life. It requires a God to control it. "Religion, alone," writes Doctor Brown, "attempts to unify *all of life;* to give each aspect of our many-sided nature its enduring satisfaction." St. Paul wrote to the Romans, "All come short of the glory of God." And that glory is the capacity for realizing our highest aspirations; the honor God has given to human beings. If we come short of that glory, we have sinned, because we have failed to put our hand into the hand of God and let Him

help us to the heights for which we are destined.

There is no peace in following the urges of the flesh and giving ourselves up to our limitations. The sin of refusing the ideal haunts us in our memory, pointing ghostly fingers at us in the night-watches. It weakens our health through nerve strain. It brings a harvest of sorrows in its wake. It dims the light of aspiration within us until we grope blindly in black despair. It degrades our manhood until even our fellow sinners shun our unloveliness. It robs us of the birthright of our humanity. Sin is not a theory we can debate and reject. It is the way of life in which every one of us walks who has not mastered his limitations and realized his aspirations. Therefore it is of supreme importance that we find God's secret by which we can satisfy our insatiable hungers.

Many hundreds of years ago, human experience expressed its wisdom in proverbs, and the generations since echo their truth. Let us listen to the counsel of King Solomon minted like gold from the fires of a many-sided life:

"Rely with all your heart on the Eternal,
Never pride yourself on your own wisdom,
Revere the Eternal and draw back from sin:
That will mean health for your body
And fresh life to your frame.

Guard above all things, guard your inner self,
For so you live and prosper."

III

"Religion, we must never forget, is always a personal matter. It is the way we relate ourselves practically to whatever in the universe is ultimate for us. In this enterprise every part of our nature is concerned. We may approach the ultimate by many roads; by that of philosophy, for example, or by that of art, or by that of conduct. But each of these approaches is partial and the result to which it leads is incomplete. When we philosophize, the mind is active. When we contemplate beautiful things, our emotions are stirred. When we take duty seriously, we find that we must act. But in religion, thought, emotion, and conduct, are all involved. Religion, alone, attempts to unify all of life; to give each aspect of our many-sided nature its enduring satisfaction."

FROM "BELIEFS THAT MATTER"
BY WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN.

CHAPTER III

THE POSSIBILITY FOR A RATIONAL FAITH

Religion in some form challenges each generation. From the earliest records of the human race man has been, as William James once said, "incurably religious." He has realized that certain moral standards are required which are demanded by the God or gods whom he dimly discerns. In the writings of all the religions, high ethical ideals are pictured in the midst of much that falls below. It is like looking out on vast mountain ranges where here and there, towering above the dark and uncertain valleys and crevasses, are snowy peaks glistening in the light of the rising sun. Paul, the great Christian apostle, was right when he wrote to the pagan Romans, "God's anger is revealed from heaven against all the impiety and wickedness of those who hinder the Truth by their wickedness. For whatever is to be known of God is plain to them; God Himself has made it plain—for ever since the world was created, His invisible nature, His everlasting power and divine being, have been quite perceptible in what He has made so they have no excuse."

There are some beautiful examples of idealism which are inspiring to-day even though they were voiced thousands of years ago. From the ancient Sanskrit in India, which goes back many centuries before the Christian era, comes this counsel:

"Listen to the exhortation of the Dawn.
Look to this day.
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the Verities and Realities of your existence;
The Bliss of Growth,
The Glory of Action,
The Splendor of Beauty:
For yesterday is but a Dream,
And to-morrow is only a vision
But to-day well-lived makes every yesterday
A dream of happiness,
And every to-morrow a Vision of Hope.
Look well, therefore, to this Day.
Such is the salutation of the Dawn."

In ancient Egypt also there was a keen sense of a moral code, which is embodied in the ancient Book of the Dead. In it the soul declares its innocence in the judgment-hall of Osiris before the council of forty-two gods:

"O ye Lords of Truth. I have brought you truth.
I have not privily done evil against mankind,
I have not afflicted the miserable,
I have not told falsehoods,
I have made no acquaintance with sin—

I have not made the laboring man do more than his daily task,
I have not been idle, I have not been intoxicated,
I have not been immoral,
I have not calumniated a slave to his master,
I have not murdered, I have not defrauded,
I have not eaten the sacred bread in temples,
I have not cheated in the weight of the balance,
I have not withheld milk from the mouth of sucklings,
I have not slandered any one,
I have not netted sacred birds,
I have given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothes to the naked."

The heart was weighed against the symbol of truth and if found correct the soul entered the life of the blessed. The code of morals was thus clearly discerned thousands of years ago; but there could not have been many who attained the blessed life, judged by our consciences to-day, for all of us in some respect have sinned as the Egyptians must have done. We and they have all come short of the glory God meant us to have.

It is no wonder that, with the realization of these moral standards, mankind in every nation has given itself to prayer and penance because of a sense of sin which is the friction between man's aspirations and limitations. The Navajo Indians spoke a prayer to the Mountain Spirit which voices the universal human longing of all who listen to the call of their higher life:

"Reared within the mountain,
Young man, chieftain,
Hear a young man's prayer.
Hear a prayer for cleanness.
Keeper of the strong rain,
Drumming on the mountain,
Lord of the small rain,
That restores the earth in newness,
Keeper of the clean rain,
Hear a prayer for wholeness.
Young man, Chieftain,
Hear a prayer for fleetness,
Keeper of the deer's way,
Reared among the eagles.
Clear my feet of slothness,
Keeper of the paths of men,
Hear a prayer for straightness."

The awareness of a supreme power, the moral standards of the higher life, and the sense of sin have been universally felt; but how to escape from the burden of failure and find a way to satisfy the hunger of heart has been the problem of religion. The history of the quest is embodied in the great systems through which men search for spiritual reality. One of the ancient systems which millions to-day follow is Buddhism. Its founder asserted that the very nature of the world of physical and emotional experience is inherently evil, and that the individual personality is the medium through which evil is realized. Therefore the only peace lies in getting rid of one's personality and all its desires.

One must conduct one's life according to a discipline through which all desire will gradually cease until at the end one becomes an unconscious part of the great sea of life, Nirvana.

Another great system of religious thought, Hinduism, to which scores of millions bow, has a different philosophy. Prof. A. Radhakrishnan emphasizes the growth of spiritual awareness in which "Intellect is subordinated to intuition, dogma to experience, and outer expression to inward realization. Religion . . . is insight into the nature of reality or experience of reality." But when they consider the earthly life they consider that humanity is caught in the wheel of Karma and cannot escape from it. The only hope is that by endless reincarnations on earth one may reach a higher spiritual level, if one by discipline cultivates intuition and inward realization. It is an endless process and man cannot hope for freedom here and now. Professor Krishnan says of God, "The Divine reveals itself to men within the frame-work of their intimate prejudices. Each religious genius spells out the mystery of God according to his own endowment, personal, racial, or historical. The variety of the pictures of God is easily intelligible when we realize that religious experience is psychologically mediated."

In China, where the Confucian faith has endured for thousands of years, there was a frank

confession of the uncertainty of knowledge of the future, and attention is being centered in the duties that exist in this present world: industry, reverence for parents and ancestors, honesty, right human relations, in which each one does the best he knows how. Under the Moslem faith which holds more than two hundred million devotees, there is one God, Allah, who is supreme over all. They inherited the Hebrew monotheistic faith and have added to it other Oriental thinking. Allah is an autocratic Ruler of the Universe and the destinies of men. If Allah wills it, so it must be, and there is no escape from the destiny. A sense of fatalism comes into the Moslem heart. He must pray and adore Allah, but there is no sense of intimate nearness between him and the Supreme Being.

In great contrast to all this comes the Christian faith as revealed by Jesus of Nazareth. It has the Hebrew background and history of the past, and has the luminous torch lighting the path for the present and all that is ahead of us. In this it fulfils the principle of evolution which demands that we hold on to the progress of the past and add something for the future. Out of the long history of the Hebrews, who by their experience with the Infinite God saw Him as one God and a God of love, Jesus came to reveal in His life the realities of what the Hebrews had

dimly seen and accepted by faith. The basic difference between all other religions and the Hebrew faith is their conception of God. It stands supreme over all other ancient faiths. To Jeremiah, one of their prophets, comes the revelation of God's true mind. He writes, "This is the message of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I keep in mind my purpose for you, a purpose of weal, not of woe, to let you have hope for the future; pray to me, and I will answer you; seek me, and you shall find me; when you seek for me with all your heart I will reveal myself to you" (Jer. 29:11–13). And again in the writings of Isaiah this revelation of God came to him: "I am the eternal your God training you for your good, leading you by the right way. If only you would listen to my orders, you would have bliss brimming like a river, and welfare ample as the ocean waves" (Isaiah 48:18). And in our human extremity who has not turned to the song of King David: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me" (Psalm 23).

Jesus draws all humanity into a personal and intimate relation with this Eternal, revealing God as a Father of love to whom we may be related as sons. He says, "I tell you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may be sons of your Father in heaven: he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. . . . You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:44–45, 48). Then later he says, "If for all your evil you know to give your children what is good, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?" (Matt. 7–11). By this conception Jesus paints the universe as a unity, centered in a Father of love Who has an intimate relation with everything He has made, and especially with us who have the capacity to be like Him in nature and, therefore, sons of God. Wherefore if we are sons, we too must be incarnations of the spirit of love, and respond to the Father's love, and share the Father's love with all the world of humanity. We must share also His joy in creation and rise to our full possibility of creative living. Thus we fulfil what has been already quoted from Professor Simpson's statement of the biological purpose of life, namely, to produce self-conscious individuals who are free, and who gain their freedom by an increasing power over their environment and by a multiplicity of relationships. Thus the mind of God is visibly expressed in the life processes of the ages; and in the person of Jesus many centuries before the science of biology existed.

It is a breath-taking conception but one which

more and more fits into a rational scientific view of life and all its possibilities. Sir Oliver Lodge writes, "We are no aliens in a stranger universe, governed by an outside God; we are parts of a developing whole, all enfolded in an embracing and interpenetrating love of which we, too, each to other, sometimes experience the joy too deep for words."

In confirmation by his experience, Horatio Dresser writes, "God is our larger, our diviner self, nearer to us than thought, closer than thought can imagine. His relation to us must ever be intimate since there is no power, no substance, no space, to separate us. We exist with Him in a relationship typified by that of a child in its mother's arms. He is our Father, though infinite in power and wisdom." In more poetic form the ancient Hebrew book of Job describes God as the great unity of all creation. "His heart and hand are on the universe, and were he to withdraw his spirit, were he to gather in his breath, the human race would perish in a moment; man would return to the dust" (Job 34:13).

All the idealism of the religious systems may lure us with their beauty, but in this age in which we are living we demand more. Our subjective visions must become objective realities in life or we cannot take them seriously. Visions are illusions and not inspirations unless they

work in real life. As Professor Kilpatrick writes, "If the modern world has superiority it is not due to the quality of its dialectic, but rather to the principle which Galileo introduced; namely, that thought to be acceptable must be tested by its observed consequences." And as Doctor Lawrence P. Jacks writes, "Reality is to be found in those highest truths which cannot be spoken, but can be, and are, embodied in deeds." Therefore religion must be tested by the scientific laws which underlie the unity of the universe and include not only the stars in their courses, and the force of electricity, but also our personality in all its capacities.

And what is the business of the scientist? In the words of one authority it is defined thus: "The business of the scientist primarily is to discover how the universe works and give us a universe of fact instead of a universe of fancy, upon which to build a sound philosophy, a true religion, and a constructive ethics. His office is to give us a universe that actually exists instead of one built up out of fear, imagination, superstition, or even metaphysical speculation." What we want in religion is a faith that faces all facts and is not afraid to look forward into a future more spacious and awesome than the present. One of the sad situations of the past two hundred years has been the way religion has resisted new light and refused to enlarge its thought

to fit new knowledge. In South America a modern statuary group is significant of the situation. A woman, Liberty, stands facing the sun with a torch in her hand. At her side is a youth peering eagerly into the future. At her feet are two men caught in the toils of serpents; one has succumbed and the other is still struggling. At the rear of the group sits a woman facing the setting sun; she is calm and placid, and her eyes are blindfolded. She is Religion brooding over the past, unaware of new learning, or the quest of youth, and blind to human struggle. In many ways this is a true picture of many who trust in religion; but there are signs of a new day. Never before was it so possible to verify our religious intuition by scientific principles.

Charles P. Steinmetz, who was recognized by the General Electric Company and other similar organizations as the world's foremost electrical engineer, was asked by Roger Babson, "What line of research will see the greatest development during the next fifty years?" After careful thought he replied: "Mr. Babson, I think the greatest discovery will be made along *spiritual lines.* Here is a force which history clearly teaches has been the greatest power in the development of men and history. Yet we have merely been playing with it and have never seriously studied it as we have the physical forces. Some day people will learn that material things

do not bring happiness and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of God and Prayer and the spiritual forces which as yet have hardly been scratched. When this day comes, the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has seen in the past four." Already there are discoveries of spiritual scientific principles by which we can test the reality of religion. Carlyle once said that awe and wonder are the heart of the religious spirit. Scientific discovery has increased the awesomeness of the universe and should be the heart of a faith in the Supreme God which bows us to the dust in wonder and praise and lifts us up into an aspiration far beyond our highest thought. Religion is not merely a tradition of the past: it is a way of life that can make us free if we are willing to live by its laws. Well did Paul discern the truth when he exclaimed: "What no eye has ever seen, what no ear has ever heard, what never entered the mind of man, God has prepared all that for those who love Him. And God has revealed it to us by the Spirit for the Spirit fathoms everything, even the depths of God" (I Cor. 2:9–10).

Let us test the life of Jesus Christ and his teachings by the scientific principles of personality. He is unique among all religious leaders

in that he assures us that freedom and victory and power are possible here and now, and that our thirst for self-realization can be satisfied. "Anyone who drinks the water I shall give him will never thirst any more; the water I shall give him will turn into a spring of water welling up to Eternal life." These words of Jesus are a challenge to all of us to verify their truth in our experience. "But look at the Christians," you may say, "there is nothing remarkable about them." That may be true about those you have known. As Chesterton says, "Christianity has not failed but it has been found so difficult, it has been rarely tried." A pioneer life in new adventure requires the courage of a true hero. Jesus Christ adventured into a way of life that mystified the earth-bound souls and stiffened them in resentful opposition because they did not want to change their thinking and habits of living. They all died and are forgotten. But those who dared to pioneer a new way of life became so powerful that they conquered the then known world and released possibilities for life that have never ceased. Aristides summed up his opinion of the early Christians when he said to the emperor, Hadrian, "Truly this is a new people, and there is something divine in them."

In his *Christ of the Indian Road,* Stanley Jones writes, "I asked an earnest Hindu one day what he thought of Christ. He thoughtfully

answered, 'There is no one else who is seriously bidding for the heart of the world except Jesus Christ. There is no one else in the field.' " After two thousand years we may reckon with all other personalities who have walked this earth, and yet have to own to the fact that the life and influence of Jesus is more far-reaching, and intrinsically different from that of anyone else. You who are controlled by the ordinary judgments of the world may think of him as "a disillusioned idealist," but if the principles of his life are tested by the well known laws of personality, it may prove that you are spiritually blind and cannot see the glory of the sunrise.

William James once said to a Harvard student, "We are in a great Universe of pushes and pulls; but it is purposeful to the core. The great Power, or Urge, or Spirit back of all, is in the birds—to make them sing; it is in the flowers—to make them bloom; it is in the stars —to make them shine—

> 'Forever singing as they shine
> The hand that made us is divine.'

But it is in you, and me, to conform us unto the glory of the Galilean (Jesus)."

And H. G. Wells discerns accurately when he says, "The truth is the Galilean has been too great for our small hearts."

Is this true of us? If so, what are the marks

of a great heart? There are six attitudes of mind we must have. Let us make them ours.

1. I will own to my need for a faith that will satisfy my highest aspiration.

2. I will confess that I know only in part, and at present am learning only bit by bit.

3. I will commit myself to the best.

4. I will reverence my personality, and satisfy it by seeking a relationship with the personality of God from whom I came.

5. I will have a faith of my own that will be expressed in terms of the highest I know.

6. I will be teachable and cultivate the spirit of a little child.

IV

"Son of Man, whenever I doubt of life, I think of Thee. Nothing is so impossible as that Thou shouldest be dead. I can imagine the hills to dissolve in vapor and the stars to melt in smoke, and the rivers to empty themselves in sheer exhaustion; but I feel no limit in Thee. Thou never growest old to me. Last century is old, last year is an obsolete fashion, but Thou art not obsolete. Thou art abreast of all the centuries. I have never come up with Thee, modern as I am."

GEORGE MATHESON.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREATEST FACT IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE

"Before the wonder of personal greatness," writes Professor Overstreet, "psychology still bows its head." Marvellous as are the discoveries of science in the vastness of the starry sky, and in the possibilities of electricity, chemistry, and biology, a greater fact is the personality of man, who has something within him that enables him to search out all these breath-taking mysteries. Personality is the highest expression of the created world, even though our wisest men have not yet discovered all its possibilities.

If we are to have a rational faith in the unseen God and be aware not only of His power to create a universe, but to understand the character of his mind and heart, He must reveal Himself in terms of the mind and heart in personality. It is not enough to trust only the intuitions of our soul, for these vary in different people according to their experience. The completeness of the human ideal must become embodied in life and be a part of our objective knowledge. Joseph Le Conte says in his book

Evolution and Its Relation to Religious Thought, "In organic evolution, species are transformed by the environment. In human evolution, character is transformed by *its own ideal.* . . . Organic evolution is pushed onward and upward from behind and below. Human evolution is *drawn* upward and forward from above, and in front by the attractive force of ideals. Thus the ideal of organic evolution cannot appear until the end; while the attractive ideals of human evolution *must* come—whether only in the imagination or realized in the flesh—but must come somehow *in the course.* The most powerfully attractive ideal ever presented to the human mind, and therefore the most potent agent in the evolution of human character, is the *Christ.*" Professor Simpson confirms this when he says, "In Jesus Christ all of purpose and perfection that was implicit and struggling to expression, becomes once for all explicit."

Thus it is scientifically rational to bow in deep awe and reverence before the historic personality of Jesus Christ as the greatest fact in human history. If this be true, who of us would dare to ignore Him? He becomes the one supreme challenge to every one of us. Long ago, in the seventeenth century, an unknown writer voiced this in these words:

"Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born,

If He's not born in thee,
Thy soul is still forlorn.
O would thy heart but be
A manger for His birth,
God would once more become
A child upon the earth."

If you who hear these words shrug your shoulders in indifference, just remember that when one is critical of a masterpiece in art it is himself and not the artist that a man judges. One night when Paderewski, the master pianist, had been lifting a great audience into the region of heavenly harmonies, a man walking out after the concert was heard to remark to his friend: "Yes, I came, but it wasn't worthwhile listening to that. However I didn't lose any time; I spent these hours figuring up the price of cotton." And he went out unmindful of the pitying and contemptuous glances fixed on him. If we are wise we say, "There must be some lack in me; O God, open my eyes and give me the heart of a teachable child that I may discover the real truth and not miss it through prejudice."

In giving the biological reason for the greatness of the personality of Jesus, Professor Simpson goes on to say, "His appearance, which is the most remarkable fact in human history, is yet in itself, in one sense, of the same order as that of the appearance of personality in animal-

ity: that is to say, it marks the introduction of a new era in human history. But the change is so profound as to constitute *Him the turning point or pivot in all history.* As a matter of simple observation, civilization moved manifestly in Him *from a self-regarding basis . . . to an other-regarding basis."* In other words, the coming of Jesus ushered in a new plane of living as high above the life of ordinary man, as man is higher than the lower animals.

It is a mystery, we say, we cannot understand it. Yes, but as Joseph Parker said, "We must either believe in mystery or be killed by facts." Who of us understands the full mystery of radio, or electricity? Yet we do not refuse to listen to distant voices or light our homes with the push of a button merely because we cannot understand it. In the same way, we dare not stand off and refuse to have an experience with Jesus Christ simply because our minds are too limited to grasp the whole truth. Doctor Parkhurst once defined skepticism as "the friction caused by a small brain trying to absorb a great idea." Let us change skepticism into discovery by becoming humble and teachable.

Perhaps it will help us to consider the uniqueness of Jesus more reverently if we listen first to some of the opinions of modern wise men who have studied His life and teachings deeply. Ernest Renan, the Frenchman, who wrote a

critical life of Jesus that startled the thinkers of his generation, says at the close of his book, "Whatever may be the unexpected phenomena of the future, Jesus will not be surpassed." Take also the testimony of Napoleon when he said to General Bertrand, "I know men: and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him."

From the Far East also come these testimonies. K. Natarajan, editor of the *Indian Social Reformer* in Bombay, wrote, "Though today Christianity but feebly reflects the spirit of its Master, the personality of the Master Himself stands before the world in compelling grandeur. Never before have so many earnest minds of all races and creeds turned to him for light and guidance in perplexity." And Ghandi, the great Hindu leader, said, "Put into practice the teachings of Jesus in all their rugged simplicity." During the Great War the distinguished Jewish ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, said that he could "see no way out for the future except in the principles of Jesus." If, after nearly two thousand years, these men and countless others

of every race and tongue and background, can speak thus of Jesus Christ, they confirm the divine intuition of St. Paul when he wrote soon after the crucifixion of Jesus, "Christ is the visible representation of the invisible God, and through Him the world is a harmonious whole."

It is a principle of life that has been recognized for thousands of years, that any thought or vision of the mind can become real to us only as it is embodied in some symbol that is interpreted by the senses. A word uttered or written is the medium of the invisible thought. Or it may be a gesture or an act which we see. Behind everything seen or heard is a reality that cannot be known without this objective symbol. Our daily life is a succession of symbolic acts indicating the hidden spirit within. As Edmund Spenser wrote,

"Soul is form and doth the Bodie make."

What revelations of the soul within we get from looking into the faces of strangers, and watching their meaningful conduct. How a painting or sculpture reveals the spirit of the artist. How the touch on the instrument reveals the heart of the musician. In the laboratories of the scientific world the search is for some adequate symbol which will enable an invisible force to express itself in its inherent power. One great scientist who had discovered

new possibilities through the coordination of certain forces said that he had been working for seven years to make a machine which would express these possibilities so that the world could see them. Thus every reality has to be embodied, or incarnate, in some symbol which conveys it to us.

The Ancient Greek philosophers called this principle the Logos, the symbolic word by which the Eternal Spirit became reality. The Hebrews recognized it also. In the ancient book of Deuteronomy the writer says, "Man lives not only by food but by every word that comes out of the lips of the Eternal." The whole universe—all of nature, and all by which we live—is part of the word of God, the symbol of His heart and mind. Therefore in describing the coming of Jesus, the beloved disciple John writes: "The Logos existed in the beginning, the Logos was with God, the Logos was divine. . . . In Him Life lay, and this life was the Light for men; amid the darkness the Light shone, but the darkness did not master it . . . so the Logos became flesh and tarried among us; we have seen His glory—glory such as an only son enjoys from his father—seen it to be full of grace and reality. . . . Nobody has ever seen God, but God has been unfolded by the divine One, the only son, who lies upon the Father's breast" (John I: 1–18). Jesus thus is the embodiment

or incarnation of the personality of God in terms of human personality. He is the supreme pioneer in the religious life—the revelation of what God intends man to be; and our most adequate symbol of what God is.

The proof of all this lies in the discoveries we make through a close study of the life and teachings of Jesus. We all believe through daily experience that the word of truth must become flesh and be embodied in our very life or it is not part of us. Uttering the word is one thing, but incarnating that word in us is quite another. Our word and our flesh must be one. We demand it in all our relationships with people. "That garment is all wool," says the salesman. We take it and find later that it is mostly cotton. We do not deal with that man again because the word of truth was not incarnate in him. As Jesus says, "The tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you speak good when you are evil? For the mouth utters what the heart is full of. . . . I tell you, men will have to account on the day of judgment for every light word they utter: for by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned." This is not an autocratic saying of Jesus, but a basic law of life which requires that the word be the incarnate expression of the soul. We judge all values of things and personalities by this law. And Jesus

expects us to judge the reality of His being the incarnation of the life of God by this same principle. Let us examine His life and see whether He is in truth what we yearn to find in God.

The great word of God which became flesh and reality in Jesus was the word *love*. We know God loved beauty when we see it revealed in sunsets and glories of nature. We know God loved order when we see it in the orbits of the planets and the sequence and the perfection of process in the creation of a snow-flake, the orderly revolutions of electrons, and the intricate order of the human body. But we do not know that God loves us, individually and collectively, so intensely that He must become one with us that we might become one with Him. We see this word of love incarnate in the life of Jesus Christ.

It is a staggering revelation. Let us recall again those words of Professor Simpson when he says the coming of Jesus into the world brought such a profound change "as to constitute Him the turning point or pivot of all history. As a matter of simple observation civilization moved manifestly in Him from a self-regarding basis . . . to an other-regarding basis." What does this mean? It is the biological definition of how love transcended animalistic strength and exploitation. It is selflessness, a new plane of living which rises above selfishness. It is the

drawing power of the love of God which lifted men from earthly citizenship to heavenly citizenship. As Professor Simpson writes, "Love is the most characteristic feature of personality; so that we can believe that God is love, and that the creative movement, an expression of His personality, is directed toward the development of a plurality of persons in perfect union with Him and completely free, and so enriching and completing the experience of Him who filleth all things." It was the vision of this reality of love that led George Matheson to sing,

> "O Love that wilt not let me go,
> I rest my weary soul in Thee.
> I give Thee back the life I owe,
> That in Thine ocean depths its flow
> May richer, fuller be."

Self-forgetting love which centres on the good of the loved one is the spirit that brings perfect oneness into life. "Perfect love casts out fear" and brings a joyous freedom of heart which releases all the possibilities of fellowship and creative service. Love makes us one with all the universe: with God and with all other life. "I give you a new command," said Jesus, "to love one another—as I have loved you, you are to love one another. By this everyone will recognize that you are my disciples if you have love one for another." And the love is not mere-

ly a word but the obedient dedication of the entire life to its control. Jesus puts the ideal squarely before us in His last conversation with His disciples, "He who possesses my commands and obeys them is he who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and appear to him."

When we read the psychology of the unconscious life back of our personality, we see how the primitive urges of the past earthly life break forth in lust, self-gratification, and animalistic tendencies; and how fear plays the leading rôle in our experience. The words of Jesus seem to come from a plane so far above that which Freud and Jung diagnose as our inner self, that we look at the Christ as an idealistic dreamer who did not know real life; unless—*unless* by an experience with Him we *know* that such love is the bridge into the higher evolution of personality where our aspirations find self-realization. John Ruskin once defined a critic as "one who cannot paint." The critics of Jesus have been those who would not pay the price of love and therefore could not know the reality of the Christ and his secret of triumph. There are thousands of people like this in every walk of life; negative souls who face backward to their limitations. Whenever anyone aspires to something new, they chorus loudly: "It can't be done. What's the use of trying? You are bound to

fail." Every new idea brings anathemas. Every hero and pioneer has had to survive in spite of the handicap of the depressing multitude. It is as true in religion as in business. Only courageous souls can know the secret of the only power by which they can be one with Jesus and his self-forgetting love.

The uniqueness of Jesus, in comparison with the leaders of all other religions, lies in the power and results of love that gives itself for others. This revelation had never come to man before. The love of Jesus is the kind that cannot rest until every human soul has found peace and rest. He cared not only that men should come into harmony with God but also find harmony within their inner life. He came to release personality from all its inhibitions. He came to help us to force down the brute within us, to sublimate all our primitive desires into powers that should help us to become veritable sons of God. Jesus is unique in that He not only paints the glory of what should be but gives us the power to atttain it. Other religions hold up high moral standards but the burden is on the struggling soul to stretch toward them. Jesus shows that God works with us and in us as the great Lover of our soul. In his *Religion in the Making,* Professor Whitehead says: "The sayings of Christ are not formularized thought. They are descriptions of direct insight. Ideas in

his mind are as immediate pictures and not analysed in terms of abstract concepts. Christ represents rationalism derived from direct intuition and divorced from dialectics." Thus Jesus' words are not mere opinions, but the revelation of what God and life really are and that human experience can prove their reality.

Jesus settled the battle between our higher and lower desires, or the strain of sin as we call it. "God loved the world so dearly that He gave up His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life, instead of perishing," said Jesus; and St. Paul verifying his own experience writes to the Romans, "There is no doom now for those who are in Christ Jesus; the law of the spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:1–2). The mystery of this we will take up in the next chapter—but the promise of soul freedom from the shackles of sin is the greatest gift that ever came to man.

Our most devastating primitive instinct is fear. Fear of poverty, fear of loneliness, fear of sickness and death, fear and anxiety about to-morrow and the problems of to-day. Jesus dealt with all these and showed us how to banish the clouds of fear by the sunshine of faith. That faith had to rest on something sure, something that draws us to it. Jesus showed us the

true picture of God and lived his life in the light and power of that reality. He pictured God as an intimate loving Father, and just as a little child runs to the outstretched hands of its parent with perfect confidence, so we can reach out to God our Father—

"Exquisitely tender, absolutely true,
Understanding all things, understanding you.
Infinitely loving, comfortingly near;
This is God your Father—what have you to fear?"

As Jesus walked the paths of Palestine, He was Himself all that He pictured God to be. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, restored the helpless, solved baffling problems, loved little children, the blind, and lepers; rescued his friends from danger, and never was deaf to the cry of the helpless. His words are like heavenly music to our depressed spirits, "Do not trouble about what you are to eat or drink in life, nor about what you are to put on your body; surely life means more than food, surely the body means more than clothes. Look at the wild birds . . . your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than birds? . . . O men, how little you trust Him. Do not be troubled then and cry 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'How are we to be clothed?' for your heavenly Father knows quite well you need all that. Seek God's Realm and

His goodness, and all that will be yours over and above" (Matt. 6:25–33). And as the Christ stands there in radiant faith and love He says, "Come to me, all who are laboring and burdened, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me." Men had never dreamed of such a God, and we see Him revealed in every tone, look, and deed of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is also unique in His revelation of the truth that *every* human being is dear to the heart of God. Man may be interested in the metaphysical speculations of other religions, but for the womanhood of the world there is no hope save in the revelation of Jesus Christ. For the first time in history, "there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." A woman from India when asked what was the most interesting sight she had seen in the United States replied, "The most amazing discovery I made was the fact that countless women in your country are not devoted to Jesus Christ. We women in India know well that He is our only hope. How is it that your women have forgotten the source of all their freedom? It came from the Christ alone." At the recent Jerusalem conference of Christian communions, one of the most impressive hours was the time when women from non-Christian lands bore testimony to what their land had been before and since

the coming of the message of Jesus Christ. One of the highest moments in the life of Jesus was the time He sat on the well of Jacob and to the amazement of his men disciples conversed with a common woman of the street about the mysteries of God's nature and relation to men. In Jesus only has every human being, however ignorant, sinful, or degraded, the hope and power to rise to the privilege of a child of God. As Tennyson puts it,

> "The woman's cause is man's, they rise or sink
> Together, dwarfed or God-like, bond or free."

Another amazing fact about Jesus is His reversal of the law of nature, called the law of the survival of the fittest. He came to redeem the unfit and make them fit by the transforming power of the law of the spiritual life. The Hebrew scriptures are full of this vision of God's purpose for the socially unfit and our duty to include them in our service. In Isaiah we read, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen; to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" People could minister to them in material ways and thus give them a better chance for freedom of mind and spirit. But Jesus taught a spiritual new birth that could release all their powers. He gloried in lifting the lowest, and through Him they attained heights beyond the cultured and intellec-

tual leaders of their day. The secret lies in the fact that our material and mental attainments bring a pride and self-satisfaction that kills the teachable, aspiring spirit. As Jesus put it, "It is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into the Realm of God." As a biologist observing life processes says, "When any form of life is occupied with its survival devices it is left to stagnate and perish."

It would be well if all those devoted to the remaking of the social order followed the wisdom of Jesus who released bodily evils only as the spirit of faith was released. If we ministered to men's spirits as well as material conditions we should find new peace and power coming into our social life. In the midst of poverty, want, and long hours of labor, Jesus transcended all humanity by the life of his spirit. Even yet the world and its ways prove the fact that Jesus was of a superior order of life. We find it so hard to go against the primitive urges of our past inheritance.

Jesus has become the centre of every national and world situation. History proves this. St. Paul was right when he wrote of Jesus, "He is the likeness of the unseen God. . . . He is prior to all, and all coheres in Him." He is the invisible standard of perfection within the heart of all men although many of them are not conscious of it. But they judge others by the ideals

of Jesus and are still dazed with wonder when they see them embodied in men and women. We bow always in reverence before self-forgetting love. Leading newspapers printed conspicuously the story of a poor old woman living in an almshouse who sent to a charity bureau a worn dollar bill, her total savings for the year, giving it to help some needy soul. Even hardened officials pause in wonder and begin to help that broken life, through which the radiance of the Christ shines.

Who then is this Jesus Christ? He is the centre of gravity for all human life. In an observatory there is a telescope which weighs twenty tons and yet its vast weight can be swung slowly around the dome by the pressure of one's little finger. Why is this possible? Because the mass of glass and metal is poised on its centre of gravity, that spot where all the twenty tons is in perfect balance. Jesus is that centre for the weight of the burdened life of the world. In Him the impossible becomes possible. We may well make a personal adventure and prove in our experience the realities of the life of Jesus the Christ, and say with Eliza Scudder,

"Thou Life within my life, than self more near.
Thou veiled Presence infinitely clear.
From all illusive shows of sense I flee,
To find my centre and my rest in Thee."

V

"I am the real and living way: no one comes to the Father except by means of me. If you knew me, you would know my Father too."

"For God loved the world so dearly that He gave up his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life, instead of perishing."

"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me; for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER V

THE ONE TRAIL TO THE LIMITLESS LIFE

The most important quest for each of us is to discover the way of life that will enable us not only to know Jesus Christ, but to become like Him. Conscious of our pitiful limitations we look at Him with despair, unless we are able to follow on in His steps and attain the same triumphant life. Is God mocking us by the personality of Jesus, or is He enabling us to find the law of life that controlled His life, that will work to-day just as surely as it worked two thousand years ago?

As we look about us we see three stages of growth in human society which mark the evolution of the personality of man. The first stage is characterized by the kind of individualism that we have inherited from our primitive past. Its great desire is to assert itself and defend itself against all others. It is the period where the human will clashes with other wills and wants its own way. Every little child passes through this stage. He cries, kicks, and later in life, shoots to get what he wants. Yet we are all different; and human initiative and outreach are some of our God-given gifts. It is

a stage in growth having the possibility for strength and weakness. Like every virtue it passes into a vice when pushed beyond a certain point. Some people justify unlimited self-expression by citing the fact that the long process of the ages is for the purpose of developing a self-conscious individual who is free. This is true; but we need to define freedom. Are freedom and self-will synonymous? Let us hold this question in our minds as we face other facts.

The second stage of growth is included in that modern overworked word *cooperation* where individuals work together for some great purpose. I am not thinking of that kind of co-operation which is an exaggerated individualism where one man who is too feeble to get all he wants unites with a hundred more like himself and becomes a superman, wielding the big stick of force. We have to-day in the business and industrial world many examples of this. It is no wonder that the ideal society does not come speedily. No, the real step of cooperation is the kind that the architect gets when he plans to realize his vision of a glorious temple in brick and stone. To do this, all the differing gifts and capacities of many men must be used: the masons and carpenters, the artists, and the workers in glass and metal play their part. The working together of all makes the dream come true.

It is not easy to bring this to pass in the realm of the spiritual life because most of us feel that our own special gift of discernment is the only one worth while; and we do not approve of others who differ. What we need is the divine glory of the flower gardens where beauty of color and shape grows in endless variety. Then the beauty of the Lord our God will be upon us. Cooperation will be possible only when the world accepts the purpose and vision of God's plan for us and makes that its aim and goal for life. He must always transcend our pet idiosyncrasies and pet aversions.

When the individual accepts the purpose of God for his very own, he passes into the third and highest stage of living where he dies to his self-desire and prays "Thy will be done." This is what we call the sacrificial law of life. We hate the word sacrifice in these modern days because we think of it as slavery and bondage. These words do not have the same meaning. Slavery depletes life. It exacts and forces us to lay down our desires for the selfish exploitation and gratification of those who are stronger than ourselves. *Sacrifice* is a voluntary laying down of our self-life for love's sake; for some great cause which is dearer to us than our own pleasure. Sacrifice is inherent in real love because love centres on the loved one and suffers, if need be, that the loved one may have what we long to

give. If love is real it is part of our very being and cannot be given to another without giving ourselves. The great Indian poet, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, voices this law of the life of love: "We realize nothing till it becomes a part of our being, and we assimilate nothing unless and until we pay the price for such assimilation. The realization of love, in order to be assimilated, must have this price in the shape of pain. If we grudge this price, love only remains a word-portraiture in rhetoric. It doesn't transmute itself into an asset in our real self. We could not take anything if it were to be simply given to us. We must merit it, earn it, and be ready to shed our life's blood for it. . . . Sacrifice is the law of the world and nothing can be gained without it, neither mastery here nor possession of the heaven beyond, nor the supreme possession of all."

Because Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the love of God, His whole life naturally was the laying down of His life for others. It was not a drama staged, but the working out of the inherent nature of love. The love of life and the life of love are as far apart as the east is from the west. Love means suffering love. God destined man for freedom. We are meant to climb higher and higher in our power for creative living by which we control our environment and use it to reveal God's hidden purposes. As Pro-

fessor Simpson reminds us, "Progressive gaining of freedom is the very core of the evolutionary process. . . . Progress in freedom could only be won by struggle with, extrication from and gradual conquest of that which is not free. If freedom is the goal, then struggle and suffering are inevitable; for freedom means extrication and transcendence."

It was because all of us had lost our power to be free by choosing to go the easy way of our limitations, which is sin against our higher life, that Jesus, if He loved us, had to suffer with and for us. In this colossal task, only love could win our will away from sin to the limitless life of the true child of God, which is our birthright. Other religions show us the ideals of life, but we never embody those ideals unless our love is called forth. Love responds to love. "We love because He loved us first," says John the disciple. Professor Whitehead says, "Buddha gave his doctrine to enlighten the world; Christ gave His life." And John puts the essence of the law of the sacrificial life in those immortal words, "We know what love is by this, that He laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for the brotherhood" (I John 3–16). And Christina Rossetti describes the real meaning of life when she says, "Earth holds heaven in the bud; our perfection there has to be developed out of our imperfections here."

Jesus plainly commits Himself to the sacrificial law of life as the gateway to victory, and as a revelation of the heart of God. He says, "This is why my Father loves me, because I lay down my life to take it up again. No one takes it from me, I lay it down of my own accord; I have power to lay it down and also power to take it up again." We read that there was a division among the people because of these words. There always has been. Some of you who are reading this book may lay it down in disdain because of the stumbling-block of this sacrificial law which means death to the self-life. We are not ready to pay the price and we tell ourselves that there is some easier and more normal way that fits in with our natural, inherited desires.

The sacrificial principle is not an end in itself. It is a means to a great end. We die to our self-life for a great purpose which is so glorious that the sacrifice becomes a mere nothing compared with it. A child was ill and about to die; the mother loved it so dearly that she sat up night after night caring for it, forgetting her weariness and need of sleep. Her love, pouring itself out in sacrifice, triumphed in the joy that came when the child was restored to perfect health. What did sleepless nights mean in comparison with this joy of joys? It is the great purpose which makes hardship a joy. The thrill of original discoveries more than makes up for the se-

vere hardships that men like Commander Byrd and his fellow-workers have to undergo in the bleak Antarctic. Jesus was stating a cosmic law when He said to the philosophical, pleasure-loving Greeks who came to see Him: "Truly, truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it bears rich fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who cares not for his life in this world will preserve it for the eternal life. If anyone serves me let him follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be also: if anyone serves me, my Father will honour him" (John 12:24–26). Does the butterfly feel the burden of the worm as it flies in the sunshine? The worm was rewarded for laying down its life.

It is the glory of the Christian faith, as we see it in the life of Jesus, that this principle of suffering love is true for both God and man. Other faiths exact sacrifice from the worshippers but the gods are serene and unmoved by it and are enthroned in splendor far removed from pain and sorrow. But our Father, the God revealed to us through Jesus Christ, suffers with us in His great love for us. We are inextricably bound up with Him. Some religious faiths deny that pain and suffering really exist. They call it an error in our thinking and deny the cosmic law of the sacrificial. Like ostriches they

hide their heads in the sand and refuse to face facts, because they want painless prosperity and rate pleasure above love—which is the bridge into the higher life. But Jesus towers above all the plausible illusions of mankind and shows us the real meaning of all facts of life. With Him, suffering is the door by which the riches of Divine love can be released in our hearts, and fit us for life with God. The deepest relationships of human love come when we suffer with another in self-forgetting love. We become one with God and with others only by accepting every opportunity to let true love possess us. "Ours is no high-priest who is incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every respect like ourselves, yet without sinning. So let us approach the throne of grace with confidence, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in the hour of need" (Heb. 4:14–16).

> "For love is life, and they who do not love
> Are not alive. But every soul that loves,
> Lives in the heart of God and hears Him speak."

The laying down of life for others is what gives birth to all the beauty of human love, and reveals the hidden truth about life's mysteries. The story Jesus told of the shepherd who searched the mountains on a wild, stormy night because a sheep of comparatively small

value was lost, proves the reality of love far more than if the picture had been a sunny pasture where the shepherd was watching them feed in abundance. It is the unforgettable beauty of the love of God which breaks the heart in responsive thanksgiving. Love pulls toward God and toward others. Therefore, if God is a God of love He must come to us sacrificially.

"My capacity to blunder," said a Hindu professor, "led me to Christ. It was not an intellectual approach, but a moral approach." The haunting consciousness of coming short of what our inner self tells us we were meant to be, makes us long to find some way out. Oscar Wilde voices the truth in his lines,

> "The deep hath calm: the moon
> hath rest: but we
> Lords of the natural world are
> yet our own dread enemy."

As we study the life and teachings of Jesus, we realize that the heart of the self-principle is sin. Sin is separation from God because God is love and therefore selfless. He walks the path which points away from our usual road. The sin or self-principle works in us all. In some way love must conquer selfishness: or we are separated from God, and from the heart of Jesus Christ who is the human reality of the heart of God.

How does sin work against the moral ideals

that make a society, based on love, possible? Take for example the ideals of the Ten Commandments. The self-principle screams out: "I want money, therefore I will steal your purse to satisfy myself. I want my own way, therefore I will kill you if necessary in order to get it. I want to indulge myself and follow my sex-urge, therefore I will commit adultery without consideration for you. I want to protect myself, therefore I lie." It is not alone the stolen purse that is sin: it is that I want to do it for my self-gratification; that is the sin principle working in one. Contrast the selfless principle working always in the heart and life of Jesus. His human life was one long giving of himself for others. He could quietly face the selfish greed of the so-called religious leaders of his time and say, "Which of you can convict me of sin?" And no one could. Even the pagan Roman army captain who watched the suffering love of Jesus till he expired on the cross said, "This man was certainly a son of God." Even Pilate the Roman Governor who broke down Roman justice, because of fear for his position, said to the enemies of Jesus, "I find no fault in Him." All through the centuries those who look closely at the life of Jesus Christ come inevitably to the conclusion of Edwin Markham:

"Here is the Truth in a little creed,
Enough for all the roads we go:

In Love is all the law we need,
In Christ the only God we know."

One of our leading scientific men says that in the development of human life, the age of martyrs dawns with the coming of rationalism, and that primitive barbarism was led by the psychology of the herd away from the intuition of the few. We still follow the call of the crowd and even to-day some of us look down upon the few who, by spiritual discernment and intuition, break away from the common urge and follow the call of the spirit. There is such a wide abyss between the two ideals that we do not understand Jesus. Many modern writers refuse to take Him seriously because He cuts across the thinking of the world. And yet there was never a time in these two thousand years when the attention of all thinkers, Christian and non-Christian, was more concerned than now with the personality of Jesus. We are beginning to see that *things* have not the highest value in life. Professor Sorley writes, "History, in the widest sense, may be looked upon as the gradual process of the spiritualization of matter; we shall see in it the successive steps by which mind gains the lead and things become contributory to values." We are aware, too, that the selfishness of the grab-and-get policy of all nations has only brought the wholesale slaughter of millions of

men and the fear of another war. We are wondering how the greed of men can be controlled for our safety. George Bernard Shaw wrote: "The only man who came out of the war with an enhanced reputation for common sense was Jesus Christ. Though we crucified Christ on a stick, He somehow managed to get hold of the right end of it . . . and if we were better men, we might try His plan."

The identification of Jesus Christ with human life in all its needs and experiences is the glory of the Christian faith. At every point we find the secret of possible human triumph over sin, over suffering, over fears, over death. There must be some way of restoring man to the destiny he was meant to have, and that way lies only in the way of Jesus. "Nothing will do except righteousness," says Matthew Arnold, "and no other conception of righteousness will do, except Christ's conception of it." In fact we are hopeless without Him. Nineteen hundred years of enlightenment have shown us no other way out. No one has ever improved on Jesus' life and teaching concerning triumphant living. As Edward Burroughs remarks, "Christianity combines the most absolute pessimism about man's unaided powers, with an unquenchable optimism as to what—in God's hand—he may become." The highest conception of God is the Christlike God, and the grandeur of the Christ

seen in the perspective of the centuries before and after him, compels us to own to the truth of His words: "I am the real and living way; no one comes to the Father except by means of me. If you knew me, you would know my Father too. You know Him now and you have seen Him." "Lord," said Philip," let us see the Father; that is all we want." Jesus said to him, "Philip, have I been with you all this time, and yet you do not understand me? He who has seen me has seen the Father. . . . Do you not believe I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak to you all I do not speak of my own accord; it is the Father who remains ever in me, who is performing His own deeds. Believe me I am in the Father and the Father is in me: or else believe because of the deeds themselves"(John 14:6–11).

Jesus Christ solves the problem of sin, death, and the redeeming of the glory of the human soul here and hereafter, by this limitless law of the sacrificial life which is the law of the universe and the heart of God. Doctor Bull writes, "The essence of sacrifice is the entire consecration of the will in eager, loving response to the will of God. The symbol of sacrifice is not the knife that slays, but the flame that kindles. The sacrifice of Christ was not His death, but His obedience; not His death, but His willingness to die." It was facing the principle of willing self-

lessness to the end of life which meant, in the time of His human life, the crucifixion on a Roman cross. Upon that cross, on which the two grimmest realities of human life centered, suffering and death were faced triumphantly in perfect obedience to this law of self-denial. "The cross is a cosmic happening," says the great scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge. If the sacrificial life had not been lived to the end, Christianity and its shouts of triumph and victory would never have been heard. Let us look at the cross and try to discern its cosmic significance and its implications for you and me.

The cross of Christ is the symbol in time of the eternal love of God. He so loves that He suffers with us in love. He is identified with us, whom He loves, in all our tragic experiences. Only love is willing to suffer for the loved one. He who does not love shuns suffering and avoids paying the price of love. If Christ is the human medium for the glory of the great Spirit, God, whom no mortal has seen, then we know that His glory is a love that gives itself to share our suffering in the intimate fellowship that common experience alone makes possible. We know that God is Love and therefore we need have no fear or sense of loneliness. "Perfect love casteth out fear"—what a sense of relief and confidence this ought to give us. To live in a world where we are sure that "underneath are

the everlasting arms" gives us courage for anything. "Nothing could part us," said a man the other day; "we've been through too much together." If that is true of human love, how much more is it true of the love that created us. Love is the pure gold minted out of the testing fire of suffering. Suffering without love is the mother of despair; with it the choicest values of life are ours.

The cross of Christ has an intimate connection with sin. It was the hatred of men's hearts that crucified the Lord of glory. They sacrificed love for the sake of their pet opinions, their power over the people, their desire for self-gratification, and aversion to self-denial. They could not bear to have their hearts revealed in all their selfishness and weakness in contrast to the light of love and obedience to God, and to the unearthly powers of Jesus Christ. The sin of men nailed the love of God to a cross of wood, and to-day the sin of our self-seeking selves crucifies the spirit of love afresh. If the sacrificial principle is a cosmic law, then we, who are part of the cosmos, are sinners if we do not obey it to the full. Professor Wieman explains psychologically the cross of Christ and its relation to sin in the following: "It delivers from sin in so far as it causes one to turn in revulsion against the evil in his own nature because of the suffering which that evil causes one who

shares it with him through community of interest which love involves." And St. Paul, writing to the Greeks in Corinth, expresses the heart of it when he says of Christ, "The love of Christ constraineth us . . . and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again." As Oscar Wilde puts it after contemplating the significance of the Cross of Christ:

> "O smitten mouth. O forehead crowned with thorn,
> O chalice of all common miseries,
> Thou for our sakes that loved Thee not hast borne
> An agony of endless centuries,
> And we were vain and ignorant, nor knew
> That when we stabbed Thy heart
> It was our own real hearts we slew."

Won by such love we turn our back on our self-will and say, "I come to do Thy will, O my Lord." That is turning to follow Jesus instead of our own desires. And as Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." And the will of God is the law of sacrificial love.

If Jesus was to share our life, He had to deal with the inevitable fact of human life, the fact of death. His life was so sinless and so full of the radiance and power of God, that He might

easily have become an invisible spirit at the time He went up the mountain with three disciples and was transfigured before them so that His earthly body was transmuted into the radiant energy of a spiritual presence. But Jesus so loved that He could not leave us without hope, and so He came down the mountain again as a man and met all the painful consequences of a human being living in the midst of enemies. "He became obedient even unto death," the apostle writes. And on that evening in the garden of Gethsemane, when He faced death, Jesus prayed: "My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt . . . Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, Thy will be done" (Matt. 26:39–42). And Love gave itself to die to prove to all mankind that love is immortal and that death is the gateway to life eternal where the life of love is the life of the Cosmos. Therefore all those who turn from sin and self-will to Jesus Christ and His way of life shall be redeemed from death to eternal life.

Only those who were one with Jesus Christ in love were witnesses of His eternal Presence which death and the tomb could not withhold. Love alone discerns the real presence of the loved one; and the resurrection of Jesus became the glorious reality that turned cowardly despairing men to fearless witnesses of His power

and the true way to life. And from this victory of Christ over sin and death, and the releasing of the power of the Spirit of Love in the lives of His friends, the Church came into being, and through the centuries millions have borne witness to this great reality.

There are those who feel that this is too amazing to be true and that the disciples of Jesus were not telling the truth when they bore witness to the risen Presence of the Christ. They say it cannot be proved scientifically because all of Palestine did not see Him. There are other sources of evidence as weighty as that which can be touched and handled. If all that Jesus was, and taught, was only the idealistic creation of some illiterate men, there is still a greater mystery to be explained. As the writer* of *Chaos and a Creed* suggests, "Men capable of imagining such perfection are not instantly and at the same time capable of lying." The uniqueness of Jesus Christ is that He is life, and life is not proved by syllogisms but by experience. The non-Christian world understood this long ago. The Bhakti Sutras of Narada say, "Never reason about God: for discussion is endless and futile. Love is the easiest way, for it proves itself and needs no other proof: for it is, indeed, peace and bliss."

The reality of significance of the Easter

*W. M. Kirkland.

morning when life conquered death centres about our answer to the question Jesus once put to his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is . . . And who do *you* say I am?" (Matt. 16:13–15). Are we among the people who said he was a great prophet—a good man, the most lovable, perfect human being we have known? If so, has the Cross and His willingness to die for the principle of self-forgetting love any meaning? Yes, it has a moral value. We love the hero who believes in his ideal to the very end. We love one who has high moral standards and lives by them. We love one who is not a coward and whose love triumphs in spite of hatred. But others have lived and died thus, and been true to the end. Jesus is not unique in this. He leads a group of rare souls who loved righteousness more than their own life. Professor Carruth voices this in his lines:

> "A picket frozen on duty,
> A mother starved for her brood,
> Socrates drinking the hemlock,
> And Jesus on the rood;
> And millions who humble and nameless
> The straight hard pathway plod:
> Some call it 'consecration,'
> Others call it 'God.'"

But suppose Jesus Christ is more than merely human: that He is as much of God as has ever

been compassed within the limits of human personality; and is the perfect medium for the full revelation of the mind and heart of God Himself! What then? Does the fact that He died on a cross, loving His enemies, make any difference to us? To those of us who answer—as Peter did when Jesus asked, "Who do you say I am?"—"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," there is a world of meaning in the Cross. Jesus replied to Peter, "You are a blessed man, Simon Bar-jona, for it was my Father in heaven, not flesh or blood, that revealed this to you." And as to Peter, so to us, the discovery dawns like the rising sun on our questioning hearts.

If Jesus is God manifest in flesh so that we can see and hear and live with Him, then the Cross means that God is truly identified with my life; that He cares for me, and cares so much that He shares my experience to show me the path to endless life. It also means that this life of pain and suffering has within it a meaning if I will accept it. The cross of pain may become the gateway to glory, as it was for Jesus Christ. It also means that there is salvation from sin; that love forgives and draws me, by its sacrifice for me, to turn from self-will to the Saviour's will; to die to sin and rise to God. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "There is no doom now for those who are in Christ Jesus; the law

of the Spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8: 1–2).

Major Farrington, who served in the Great War, had an experience which brought the reality of the eternal truth to his heart. He embodied it in the simplicity of a poem which won the prize in a great university. His experience may also be ours if we are willing to come near to Jesus Christ.

"I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
Could in the God-head be;
I only know that Manger Child
Has brought God's life to me.

I know not how that Calvary's Cross
A world from sin could free;
I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me.

I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery,
I only know a living Christ
Our immortality."

VI

"To this day, we know the entire creation sighs and throbs with pain; and not only so, but even we ourselves, who have the Spirit as a foretaste of the future, even we sigh to ourselves as we wait for the redemption of the body that means our full soulship."

FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS.

"We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us insight to know Him who is the real God; and we are in Him who is real, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the real God, this is life eternal."

FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER VI

JESUS AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

One of the surprises in the realm of aviation has been its remarkable value to archæology. The existence of unsuspected ancient sites, invisible to observers on the ground, has been revealed by air photography. In Palestine the ancient city of Mizpeh, buried far underground, was discovered from the air; also prehistoric Woodhenge on Salisbury Plain in England. This is symbolic of what Jesus Christ, from the divine height of His personality, does for us. He reveals to us the hidden depths of our inner life, which we who are close to ourselves have never seen in reality.

In this the Master becomes intimately related to the science of Psychology, by which modern scholars are tracing our personal conduct back to what the great authority Doctor Jung calls the "collective unconscious," where the contents and activity belong to racial inheritance; and the "personal unconscious," where they belong to individual experience. Out of this our personal soul comes, born of the purpose of God, who is behind all unconscious life. We can

reach out into the unknown and establish direct relations with God. "The kingdom of God is within you," said Jesus, and it is back in the hidden depths of ourselves that we face Him in truth. Henry Fairfield Osborn, the great authority on Anthropology, in tracing human beings back 1,250,000 years, sums up his study in these words, "To my mind, the human brain is the most marvellous and mysterious object in the whole universe, and no geologic period seems too long to allow for its natural evolution." If this be true, we need the help and teaching of Jesus, who sees us in the perspective of our past, present and future. "Jesus Christ is always the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever. Never let yourselves be carried away with a variety of novel doctrines," says the writer to the Hebrews. And John writes for us these words: " 'Truly, truly, I tell you,' said Jesus, 'I have existed before Abraham was born.' " Therefore in taking the guidance of Jesus about ourselves we are following a divine psychology which has the whole horizon of life in its view and transcends the contradictory opinions of great, human authorities like Freud, Adler and Jung, who differ among themselves. The poet Tennyson saw the truth intuitionally when he wrote:

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be:

They are but broken lights of Thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

The text books of psychology to-day are obsolete to-morrow. All honor to those who patiently seek for the truth of Nature and personality. More and more the teachings of Jesus are being confirmed by human experience. The law of self-forgetting love is still the one way by which we can link ourselves to the eternal love and power of God, and to human society for the largest and most creative experience in this world.

An illustration of this was recently given in one of our criminal courts by some noted psychoanalysts. "We find Mr. —— sane. We also find that he is a psychopath and therefore is a dangerous individual to be at large. We believe that he is a dangerous psychopath because he is unmoral, lacking a sense of ethics, emotionally unstable, being subject to unrestrained outbreaks of temper and rage and egocentric to a pathological degree." Thus the wise scientists can diagnose the trouble, but it takes the power of God to redeem the man from the serpentine coils of his animal life that are strangling the free man he was meant to be. "No man is free," said Epictetus, "who cannot command himself." And we need to remind ourselves again of the statement of Professor Simpson,

that the process of life was for the purpose of creating a self-conscious individual who is free, and who gains that freedom by an increasing control over his environment and by a multiplicity of relations. The law of self-forgetting love alone will enable one to overcome the obstacles in the great adventure for freedom, and alone will make possible unlimited relationships with others.

Therefore we cannot ignore the psychological teachings of Jesus, because He alone was perfect in His control over all environment and in relationships with all people. He never breaks the law of His own personality as all of us do, times without number. Sidney Lanier says of Jesus what never could be said of the best of us:

> "What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
> What least defect or shadow of defect,
> What rumor tattled by an enemy,
> Of inference loose, what lack of grace,
> Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's,—
> Oh what amiss may I forgive in Thee
> Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ."

And it is this Christ who said: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd; a good shepherd lays down his own life for the sheep. . . . I call you friends because I have imparted to you all that I learned from my Father."

Let us look at some of the teachings of Jesus

which have to do with our guidance in conduct and which give the clue to moral and spiritual victory. Doctor Hinkle in that significant book *The Re-creating of the Individual* says, "To gain a transformation of crude human impulse into higher forms and to attain those greater potentialities always dimly sensed, which science now tells us are immeasurable, has been the unconscious meaning of all the religious exercises, all the ethical and moral strivings of man. . . . In the contents of the personal unconscious the moral law plays a most important part and cannot be safely ignored by anyone interested in his own welfare." There is no greater moral authority than Jesus because the miracle of His perfection was not a theory preached, but a life lived. We do not believe in Him because of the miracles, but we believe in the miracles because of Him. If psychology says we cannot ignore moral law, we are not unscientific in studying the moral teachings of Jesus.

One of the goals of psychology is to attain what it calls "integration," the unifying of the self. But countless people are so divided and helpless in the clutch of conflicting desires that some power outside of themselves must help them to this unity. Jesus gives us the picture of God as the Father of love with whom we are meant to live as a little child in His protecting

arms. We give ourselves to that love and find that it is stronger than all our enemies, and envelops us with such tender care for all our needs that our heart fairly breaks in grateful love and trust. Love takes away all fear and centres our desire on God and a close fellowship with Him. Life becomes unified and focussed in trusting ourselves wholly to Him. As Doctor Hinkle puts it, "The Christian religion . . . laid a particular emphasis upon the personal element and introduced the love motive as distinguished from the sexual, placing its greatest emphasis upon the submission of the ego to this higher love." How much simpler is the beauty of the picture in which Jesus embodies this truth: "The eye is the lamp of the body: so if your eye is generous, the whole of your body will be illumined, but if your eye is selfish, the whole of your body will be darkened. And if your very light turns dark, then—what a darkness it is: No man can serve two masters: either he will hate one and love the other, or else he will stand by one and despise the other—you cannot serve both God and Mammon." "Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned from Him, comes to Me. Not that anyone has seen the Father—he only who is from God has seen the Father" (Matt. 6: 22–24; John 6: 45–46).

Can we meet this challenge for integration,

and make Jesus Christ once and for all time the goal of our life? Can we say as St. Paul said, "My one thought is, by forgetting what lies behind me and straining to what lies before me, to press on to the goal for the prize of God's high calling in Christ Jesus"? It is the only way to the perfect integration that unifies all life about its highest possibilities.

There are many modern psychologists, especially in America, who do away with God as the goal of all our ideals and aspirations and fix our minds on our primitive past. By showing us the natural cause of our sexual and egotistic instincts they say that because these are natural we cannot help having them; and that the way to freedom and naturalness is a self-expression of these desires. Therefore we need not be haunted by the thought of sin, or God, because all we need is to say, as an irascible farmer once said in justification of his cruel deed, "I'm as good as my nature allows me to be."

These men ignore the fact that rational man has looked for the rational in the universe and found it in science: and has also sought idealism and found it in life experience by making his dream come true. If we tend to be rational and find the cosmos rational, then the Creator of the cosmos and of us must also be rational, or, in other words, have all that personality has

and infinitely more. We call that Creator God, the Father of all we are. If we try to make our ideals real in experience, we must reckon with Jesus who, through the known history of the world, transcends in perfection through his life on earth every ideal man has ever had. It is a negative and introverting experience to have our eyes only on the "pit whence we were digged." What is the use of living if we turn our backs on aspiration and idealism? Professor Whitehead in his *Science and the Modern World* says: "The worship of God is not a rule of safety. It is an adventure of the spirit, a flight after the unattainable. The death of religion comes with the repression of the high hopes of adventure." And we may add that this repression means not only death to religion but death to any desire to live. Professor Whitehead goes on to say of the life of Christ: "Its glory is for those who can discern it, and not for the world. It has the decisiveness of a supreme ideal."

Another weakness of modern psychoanalysis is its emphasis on a man's relation to his own experience, centering him on himself, and ignoring his relation to the experience of others. Self-analysis and recognition of the reality of our animalistic urges is only useful when we are hearing the voice of God calling us into closer relation with Him. Adam's experience in

the garden of Eden is symbolic of what we, as rational, normal human beings, experience. After eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "The Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou?" And Adam said, "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." There *are* bestial urges in our life. They degrade us, and we stand unclean before the light of God's holiness. In our fear over our sense of uncleanness the voice of St. Paul comes with unspeakable comfort: "Miserable wretch that I am. Who will rescue me from this body of Death? God will. Thanks to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus there is no doom now for those who are in Christ Jesus; the law of the Spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 7: 24–8: 2).

Thus the recognition of our natural inheritance of animalistic desires is not to free us from moral responsibility, but to humble our egotism before the God of our highest idealism; and let Him lift us up into friendship with Him by adventuring with Jesus toward moral perfection. In other words, we must live not to ourselves but to God and to the highest ideals of relationship with others. We must see life in its largest unity including God, man, and the other man.

One of the sternest challenges Jesus put to his disciples were his words, "I tell you truly, unless you turn and become like children you will never get into the Realm of heaven at all." This is not an arbitrary statement but an essential part of the psychology of greatness of personality. The child spirit is ours when we realize the vastness of the world opportunities and our feebleness and limitations. Such realization brings humility and a sense of awe. They are the marks of greatness. King Solomon showed his greatness by this spirit. He prays: "O Eternal, my God, Thou hast made Thy servant King instead of David my father; and I am a mere child. I know not how to go about my business. Thy servant is surrounded by Thine own chosen people, a vast host, too great to be numbered or counted. So grant Thy servant a thoughtful mind for governing Thy people, that I may distinguish right and wrong. For who can bear the weight of this government?" (I Kings 3:7–9). The great prophet Jeremiah also cried out when the vision of God's purpose for him dawned upon him, "Ah, but, O Lord Eternal, I cannot speak, I am too young." King David also had this spirit of awe when he sang: "O thou Eternal One, our Lord, what majesty is Thine o'er all the world. . . . Let me sing of this, Thy heavenly strength, like tiny children lisping out Thy praise" (Psalm 8: 1–3).

The greatest scientists and discoverers have always been so humble before the greatness of their discoveries that they have shrunk from publicity. It is the child-spirit that senses proportions and relative values, and without that no great achievement is possible.

Humility and awe lead to teachableness. Cocksureness is the sign of inferiority and superficiality. The true child-heart is full of questions, and eager for knowledge, and willing to be taught. It has an open mind, ready to be guided into all the truth. The spirit of awe and wonder draws the child-heart to aspiration and lures it to adventure without counting the cost. The reason so many of us have no intimate experience with Jesus Christ is that our minds are closed. We think we know all there is to know about religion and we are more interested in our theories and fixed opinions than we are in new truth and the discovery of new horizons. We become hard and obstinate and fossilized. Pope once said, "An obstinate man does not hold opinions but they hold him." Such was the spirit of the Pharisees who condemned Christ to death because His revelations of truth did not coincide with their fixed opinions. Hosts of Christians and cynics alike are blind to the glory of God because they have lost the child-heart. Have we lost it? No price is too great to pay for the open mind and heart.

Jesus dealt also with the psychology of fear. Out of the "personal unconscious" back of each of us arise fears which hold even the best of us in bondage. Nothing defeats our highest life like this. Even religious souls who say they believe in a loving God as revealed by Jesus Christ, hold it as a theory instead of living it out in experience. The faces of men and women on the streets reflect fears and forebodings. They are looking for the worst and finding it. Fear is really faith in what we do not want. We fix our attention on the thing we wish to avoid and gravitate unconsciously toward it. Jesus spoke often about putting away anxiety from our mind. An anxiety is a fear about something which does not exist save in our imagination. We are anxious about the next week or to-morrow, and all our courage to face life oozes out. And yet we do not know what a day will bring forth, and cannot see around the bend in the road. Why not imagine beauty instead of blackness? "O men, how little you trust Him," exclaims Jesus when He is trying to help people to see that the God who made and loves them knows their needs and will not fail them. Fear comes in only when love and trust in the power of the unseen, but ever-present, heavenly Father is fiction and not fact. "Perfect love casts out fear," says St. John: or as Doctor Moffatt translates it, "Love in its full-

ness drives all dread away . . . anyone who has dread has not reached the fullness of love." The secret of human triumph lies in a faith in God's love which destroys fear and leads on to spiritual adventure.

There are some psychologists who interpret freedom in terms of unrestrained self-expression. They encourage us to experiment freely with all phases of life in order to know life and be free from all repressions. President Glenn Frank of the University of Wisconsin said to the students: "In certain quarters anything and everything is looked upon as adding to one's experience. A college lad gets drunk for the 'experience' of it. He plays with even hotter fire in order to 'see life' to the full. All these phrases about 'seeing life' and 'having experience' and 'facing life frankly' are the stock-in-trade of a short-sighted school of writers who are digging the grave of art as well as of morals. The future of art as well as of morals depends upon a lithe alertness of mind and spirit, and this alertness of mind and spirit needs the healthy soil of self-control in which to flower." Self-control does not hamper freedom, it releases it.

The psychology of Jesus interprets freedom in terms of power for self-control and self-discipline. His way of life does not spell self-repression, but a will to reach the goal of a great ideal which unites all lesser desires for the great

end. The athlete who is determined to win a game does not consider self-control in eating a repression, but a release of physical energy to help him win. The musician does not mind the long hours of practice and self-denial for the joy that is set before him of being a great concert pianist. The scientist plods years in a laboratory in the hope of discovery. All that is worth while in human attainment comes from uniting all our powers, physical, mental, and spiritual, toward the great end. Freedom is not being spendthrift with our powers but choosing our goal and winning it. Jesus puts it graphically when he says: "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. What profit is it for a man to gain the whole world and to forfeit his soul? What could a man offer as an equivalent for his soul?" To gain freedom of soul means freedom for the whole personality. Jesus says: "Truly, truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave. Now the slave does not remain in the household for all time, the son of the house does. So if the Son sets you free, you will be really free." It is a goal worth all the cost of self-discipline. Is there any higher freedom than to be like Jesus Christ with power over nature, and spirit, and the range of the stars?

Psychologists dwell much upon the power of

our "personal unconscious" to account for our conduct. In the ancient days of the Book of Job, it was taken for granted that God could control the "unconscious." We read: "God has one mode of speech; yes, and if man heeds it not, another. In dreams, in visions of the night when men fall into trances slumbering on their beds, He reveals things to them, and sends them awful warnings, to draw them back from evil, and make them give up pride; to save their souls from death, their lives from rushing on to their doom. . . . Now God does all this over and again twice, thrice for men, to bring them back from death into the sunshine of life" (Job 34). Jesus also reckons with the power of our unconscious life in his teaching. It concerns his assurance that we, insignificant atoms as we are, in relation to the vast universe can become the home of God's indwelling Holy Spirit, and that the experience is akin to a new birth. In one of his letters William James says: "I attach the mystical or religious consciousness to the possession of an extended subliminal self with a thin partition through which messages make irruption. We are thus made convincingly aware of the presence of a sphere of life larger and more powerful than our usual consciousness with which the latter is nevertheless continuous. . . . Religion in this way is absolutely indestructible. . . . The further margin of the

subliminal field being unknown, it can be treated as by transcendental Idealism as an Absolute Mind with a part of which we coalesce; or by Christian theology as a distinct Deity acting on us. Something not our immediate self does act on our life."

In that immortal conversation between Jesus and the intellectual scholar Nicodemus, Jesus tells him: "Truly, truly I tell you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter God's Realm. . . . Do not wonder at me telling you, You must all be born from above." Then during his last long talk with his disciples he says: "I will ask the Father to give you another Helper . . . even the Spirit of truth: the world cannot receive Him, because it neither sees nor knows Him, but you know Him because He remains with you and will be *within* you. . . . I have still much to say to you, but you cannot bear it just now. However, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will lead you into all the truth." In other words, every one of us needs a Divine Spirit to rescue our spirit from the bondage to our primitive past and give us new power for spiritual conquest. Jesus not only had all power to reveal God to us, but imparts power to us also to become like Him.

How does the Spirit of God, after He has entered our inner life, transform us from the mere experiences of the flesh? St. Paul de-

scribes the man before and after this new birth. In writing to the Galatians he says: "Now the deeds of the flesh are quite obvious, such as sexual vice, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, magic, quarrels, dissension, jealousy, temper, rivalry, factions, party-spirit, envy, murder, drinking bouts, revelry and the like; I tell you beforehand as I have told you already, that people who indulge in such practices will never inherit the Realm of God. But the harvest of the *Spirit* is love, joy, peace, good temper, kindliness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control." In other words, the decision to die to self and live for our Lord gives birth to that self-forgetting love which Christ had, and which conquered death and lives forever.

The new birth comes from the child-heart which asks the Father for this gift of the Spirit. Jesus said: "If for all your evil you know to give your children what is good, how much more will your Father give the Holy Spirit from heaven to those who ask Him?" This is what we mean by saying that Jesus redeems our souls from sin and gives us eternal life. Out of the depths of the unconscious life within us the Spirit brings to our memory those things which will guide us to the life of spiritual victory. It is not a theory but an experience, which the best men and women of countless generations have known as the secret of their power to live like

Jesus Christ. It is the miracle of the Christian religion. Just as Jesus transcended human life by the God within Him, so we too may pass from death to life and immortality by receiving as a child the gift of God's Spirit. By it we live in perfect unity with the whole universe, bound by love to the heart of God and to all humanity.

Who dares make this test? Who dares choose to die to self and to live only to Jesus Christ? If you have the courage to make the adventure let this be your constant prayer:

"Breathe on me Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me Breath of God
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do or to endure.

Breathe on me Breath of God
Till I am wholly Thine,
Till all this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me Breath of God
So shall I never die:
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine Eternity."

VII

"Truly this is a new people and there is something divine in them."

ARISTIDES TO EMPEROR HADRIAN
CONCERNING THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

"We are children of God now, beloved. What we are to be is not apparent yet, but we do know that when He appears we are to be like Him. . . . And everyone who rests this hope on Him, purifies himself as He is pure."

FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER VII

THE MAKING OF CHARACTER

Some of us may feel that all we need is to see the real Jesus in all his perfection. What more can anyone want than the realization of such a love which includes within its sheltering arms every man, woman, and child born into the world! If we see Him as He is, and acknowledge His authority, is not our search for the meaning of life at an end?

Startling as it may seem, this is not enough. In fact our difficulties have scarcely begun. Even though the whole world saw Jesus as the perfect expression of what they would like God to be, the authority of His character alone would not be sufficient for us. We would be so depressed by the contrast between our unworthy selves and His radiance that we would not have the courage to go on living. People become dissatisfied when a perfect standard reveals imperfection. A student is happy playing a piano until he hears the great master pianist. After that he may be so discontented with his lack of skill that he refuses to try any more, unless he can attain the same height. There is nothing more depressing than to be faced continually with

personal limitations, and be powerless to change them.

This is one reason why there is so much restless discontent in the world to-day. Standards of living have increased and all of us want to have the best. The sight of an automobile makes one unhappy with a slow-moving cart. Even birds fight for the tidbit they see borne off by their successful fellow. Every sight of perfection produces bitter competition or despair.

What is true in the material world is also true in the spiritual realm. It is not enough for me to have a God. I must be able also to become Godlike. If I cannot attain I will remove Him far from daily life. That is why the gods are pictured as remote in distant splendor far from the ways of men. That is where countless people put Jesus Christ. They dare not look at Him too closely else they lose their easy contentment.

In the impenetrable snows of the Andes mountains between Chile and Argentine there is a statue of Christ commemorating peace. There it stands in lofty isolation while people pass to and fro through a tunnel beneath the mountain. It is the peculiar glory of the Christ that He brought God near, intimately bound up with the life of men; that His authority is not only external but internal. We see Him in all His beauty, and then—miracle of miracles!—we

may receive His spirit within us, enabling us to *reproduce* His image from character to character. This is the unique revelation of His life which thousands fail to understand.

"We may not search the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down,
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
For Him no depths can drown,
But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He:
And faith has still its Olivet
And love its Galilee."

Therefore, when Jesus says, "Not everyone who says Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21), He is not stating an arbitrary fact but a natural necessity. It is a social necessity that the will of God should be done; that we should be like that which we worship as an authority. Therefore the making of Godlike character is the price of our peace. It alone can satisfy that haunting feeling that we must attain perfection. Thousands of years ago the writer of Genesis discerned this in the words that Adam said to God, "I heard Thy voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, and hid myself, because I was naked" (Gen. 3:10). Humanity has always hidden from perfection, and feels "a Presence that disturbs." A man is truly known by the com-

pany he keeps, for the company reveals his true ideals.

A big task awaits us. Jesus has shown us what we are to be if we are to inherit the riches of the ages. How can we measure up? Where can we be trained in character and fitted for kinship with Him?

If we look closely we shall find that God arranged life to meet this need for character. Every human being has at least two God-given sources from which likeness to Him may be developed.

The first opportunity to become Godlike is found within the home. This may bring a cynical smile to our lips in the light of modern family conditions, but let us face facts frankly. It makes no difference whether a man is born in Patagonia or Philadelphia, or under what religious faith, the institution of the family was divinely intended to give him at least four gifts which are essential for life. And this is in spite of the fact that many people to-day look at family life as artificial and non-essential, and are loud in predicting its passing out of human society. It is one of the marks of our moral decadence for which we shall have to pay heavily in future days as ancient Rome once paid. Anything which thwarts nature will be revenged by nature sooner or later.

Let us not shrug our shoulders with an in-

credulous air until we have considered at least four basic facts which God meant every family to face.

First, every human being was meant by God to learn *unselfishness* through his home; and thus bear the very imprint of the image of God. How do we know this? Quite simply from the fact that every one born into the world came into a group of at least three human spirits, father, mother, and child. Father was given mother and the child to care for; mother must think of father and child; child has father and mother. How could any one in a group of three choose selfishness without thwarting the plan of the cosmos! Others, others! "No man liveth to himself!" Long before any religion was organized God made it the natural order of life that unselfishness should rule the human heart.

Why then does selfish greed rather than care for others rule the hearts of men? Because the fathers and mothers of the world have allowed the primitive desires of self-preservation and acquisitiveness to reign in their hearts, instead of the spirit of love which always means selflessness rather than selfishness. There is no more effective way of rolling the world on into light than to face the challenge of this purpose of God for our life.

We have been given the supreme honor of becoming co-creators with God. Into the hands

of a man and a woman is entrusted the divine task of shaping a body for every living spirit that God sends into the world. We create a body for that baby spirit and then straightway degrade its high birth by an example and training in a selfish life; and thus cut the cord of possible fellowship with our heavenly Father. Professor Simpson defines sin as a "misdirection of personality," and thus lays at the door of every modern family a crushing burden of sin; for we are bent on directing our own personalities and those of our children away from God's plan for our lives. And we are suffering the consequences in the thousands of wrecked homes and broken-hearted men, women, and children. They have thwarted the possible spiritual birth and have chosen to remain in closer contact with the animal plane where primitive instincts have sway.

It would be so easy to transform this old world if every parent trained the little ones from birth to think of others instead of themselves, and made it the standard for the home. And this means the same ideal for all. There are many homes where the mother, or an older sister, or father, do indeed lead a life of sacrificial love for others, but they fail to see that this same ideal should be developed in their loved ones. Through a mistaken love it is easier to monopolize the art of unselfishness than to

help others to practise the same virtue. Not long ago a poor old mother was sobbing her heart out in loneliness and want wondering why her sons had deserted her. She had served them in loving forgetfulness all her life, leaving them free to go their own ways and think only of themselves. So they had gone their own way and had not come back. Here again the same principle works. It is not enough for a child to have a perfect example of unselfish love in the daily life of a parent. It is the training of the child in the same ideal that constitutes the supreme tests of the family.

The second law of life that God meant every human being to learn in his home is the reverent and obedient cooperation with the central authority of the home. In spite of some recent theories to the contrary, one cannot ignore the obvious plan of God without sorrow. Why is it that every human spirit is born in weakness, inexperience and with only a slowly developing consciousness? Why is it that years have to elapse before the child is fitted to cope with life? Why is it so dependent on the strength, tenderness and wisdom of its parents in order to survive at all? There is only one answer. It must be God's plan that in the home the child should learn the strength that comes from dependence and the inspiration of some tangible centre for its little life. The home is the first social com-

munity in which a child can be trained for the larger social life of the world. As it looks up into the loving eyes of its parents it learns the meaning of the Fatherhood of God. It takes both a father and a mother to express perfectly the blend of strength and tenderness in the heart of God. In fact, father and mother were meant to be the first God a child should reverence and love. The character of the unseen God we worship in later years is determined largely by the character of our human parents. As Barrie puts it so beautifully, "The God to whom little boys say their prayers has a face very like his mother's." What a task is ours to see that the miniature society within the walls of the home shall be the kind of world in which we want our children to live, and that we shall not make it hard for them to trust the wisdom of a heavenly Father because of our failure in Godlike character.

Many who read these lines will feel they have an alibi in the modern chorus that youth is so different that it is impossible to hold to those ancient ideas. Literature is full of lamentations over the helplessness of parents to cope with these new currents that are sweeping away the old foundations of home life. It might humble us somewhat to know that the world has always been saying these things. In Constantinople there is an Assyrian tablet dating from

about 2800 B. C. Four thousand eight hundred years ago is some distance back from to-day. But listen to what the tablet says: "Our earth is degenerate in these latter days; there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; *children no longer obey their parents;* every man wants to write a book, and the end of the world is evidently approaching."*

How natural those words sound! Then again let us jump through the centuries to the time of Tacitus who wrote from Rome shortly after the death of Jesus in the first century A. D. In his essay on oratory he says: "In the good old days every man's son born in wedlock was brought up not in the chamber of some hireling nurse, but in his mother's lap and at her knee. And that mother could have no higher praise than that she managed the house and gave herself to her children. . . . Nowadays, on the other hand, our children are handed over at their birth to some silly little serving maid, with a male slave, who may be anyone, to help her,—quite frequently the most worthless member of the whole establishment, incompetent for any serious service. . . . Yes, and the parents themselves make no effort to train their little ones in goodness and self-control. They grow up in an atmosphere of laxness and pertness, in which

**Nineteenth Century Evolution and After*, Marshall Dawson.

they come gradually to lose all sense of shame, and all respect both for themselves and for other people. Again there are the peculiar and characteristic vices of this metropolis of ours, taken on, as it seems to me, almost in the mother's womb,—the passion for play actors, and the mania for gladiatorial shows and horse racing. When the mind is engrossed in such occupations, what room is left for higher pursuits?" Does it not seem incredible that this could have been written nearly two thousand years ago? It is so modern in its point of view!

We do well to heed these solemn words when we recall that mighty Assyria has passed away, and Rome too passed away. History can and does repeat itself. We, too, by thwarting the divine plan for the home may lose our chances. What is the difference between them and us? Only one! It is now *our* turn to meet the situation. How many races will rise and fall before the world learns to live within the Divine plan for the family life, God alone knows. Even now, to-day may be our last opportunity. If a child does not learn reverence for a central authority based on experience and love, how can it be fitted to live in a world where on every hand are natural laws which demand respect and cooperation or bring swift destruction? The scientist knows that he lives only as he obeys the laws of the universe. His power grows

by discovering their methods, not by defying their power.

The third means to character inherent in the home is the sense of responsibility. This is what balances authority. Any home which develops obedience to a central family government and gives the child no part in the making of that social group is unbalanced. The most precious gift of a home is the chance to develop leadership qualities through working out with others the problems of life. There are some homes which have this ideal. One comes vividly to mind. Around the hearth-fire a father, mother and two boys met in family council. One of the boys was eager to possess a dog. The matter was to be settled after a full discussion of what was involved. How much should be paid for the dog? How much would his food cost? Who would build the kennel? Who would feed him when the family was away? Who would feed him when the boys were at school? These and other questions were faced fully by all and the responsibility shared and the dog bought. Years afterward one of the boys was appointed to a responsible position, and the newspapers commented on his youth. It seemed like genius, but it was the genius of a mind accustomed from childhood to facing all facts before making decisions. The boy had the power that comes only from habits of responsibility. The

attitude of the ancient Hebrews was wise as voiced by Jeremiah their prophet, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:26). One of the greatest dangers confronting thousands of young Americans is that they do not know the value of money or the wise proportions of a well-balanced budget. They spend according to desire rather than according to an intelligent sense of responsibility. For this, their homes are accountable.

Some parents may excuse themselves on the basis of their desire to give their children a care-free youth. The father says, "I had to work so hard in my youth that I'm determined that my children have every advantage." This is a high motive, but one may well ask, "What *is* every advantage?" A well-trained responsible mind to meet the strain of later years? or one so inexperienced that it falls before the first attack of organized evil? As for happiness, compare the joyous appreciations of the well-ordered life with the restless discontent of the self-indulgent child, and one needs no further proof.

The fourth chance for character which God intended every home to give to its children is the safeguard of a sound physical body. For this, parents are responsible. As co-creators with God, the deepest experience of the race has taught the value of facing squarely the prin-

ciples of eugenics before marriage and living in obedience to those laws which condition the lives of children. Food, sunshine, sleep and exercise are religious duties. There are some instances in the world when great minds have towered above feeble bodies and done their work; but even these great ones would have been greater had they been free from physical handicaps. The inevitable ills that flesh is heir to are hard enough at best without being raised to a climax by the stupidity of parents. The increase of insanity, the neurotic conditions that breed crime and disordered lives are the sins of modern parents for which God will hold them responsible.

Perhaps some boy or girl reading these pages will say in bitterness, "I have been cheated by my family of my right for character. How can I help it?" You may indeed have been defrauded; but there is still hope. You have your life before you. Even now you can begin to train yourself in these qualities that are the price of success. Many have rescued themselves by seeing the way and walking steadfastly in it. Why not you!

This brings us to our second great source of character. The home may have failed, but here is another way to light and power. It comes through the impress of the Spirit of God on the heart and mind—if we accept the fact that

just as the electrons of the material world are controlled by some invisible energy, so our finite mind may be controlled by the Infinite mind: we face chaos if we do not consciously strengthen this connection. Amid the complex influences of life we feel the pull of conflicting forces. We are bound in our weakness to yield to the magnetic power of some of them: why not transcend them all by letting the invisible God be the controlling force in our life! We are bound to worship something: why not God!

What are some of the effects that this conscious look to God produces on character? First among these is a new sense of perspective; the ability to see things in true proportion, and to sense their true reality. If we turn aside from the distractions of the outer world and enter quietly into the inner room of our being, and look at ourselves in the light of the character of God, we see where we have become distorted from perfect symmetry. We gain a new sense of self-respect for all that is fine within us, and a new humility and teachableness about our mistakes and perverseness that gives us the power to change our ways, and brings us into harmony with God and our fellow men. The trouble is we are morally lazy and do not want the light. A shiftless housekeeper pulls down the shades and uses dim lights in order that others may not see the dust and dirt which

would be visible in the radiant light of the sun. If we do not wish to know the real truth about our disordered lives we turn away from the light of God within. Honest and courageous people are glad for the chance to see things as they really are. It is as Jesus once said, "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light."

Happy are those boys and girls who were taught from babyhood to pray, and to hold the thought of God in their hearts at some time each day. They have a chance to live in a triumph never experienced by those who never turn to the inner light.

It is not alone a sense of true values that we need, but the power to grasp them. It is in this inner experience that we find the truth of those words of Jesus, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). This is not proved by an academic discussion; it is experienced in the life of conscious outreach to the God within our hearts. One of the secrets of the power of that great general, Charles George Gordon, was the daily habit he had of winning out spiritual victories. In the loneliness of his life in Africa, he writes to his sister about being in prayer in his tent "hewing Agag in pieces"; fighting his perverse tendencies, and turning them into strength of character by the power of God. This is what the psychologists mean by bringing every im-

pulse into *integration* around some transcendent focus.

We may have the courage of lions and yet need a kind of fearlessness which has no strain in it. This comes alone from a sense of the reality of God's protection. There is no courage in the world equal to that which walks the street in quiet confidence that all the power of a friendly universe is available for the one who trusts God. David, hunted by Saul that he might kill him, writes exultantly, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *I will fear no evil for Thou art with me*" (Psalm 23). What kills people to-day? Worry, anxiety and fear of the forces of evil. Is it possible for us to have David's faith, or was he living in a fool's paradise? The experience of too many thousands of people who have related themselves to God in their inner life bears witness to the reality of his experience.

How much pain and tragedy in life would be escaped if every child were trained to listen for the inner voice of God, and learned to use the times of solitude for the education of his spirit. We shall have to change our ways of living to achieve this. In these modern days we live in crowds, play in crowds, study in crowds, and make no place for aloneness. It was because the desert was so close to them that the prophets and seers discerned true values. Every one of

us needs a desert, some spot where we can get away for a little time to think. "I hate to be alone," said a friend, "it makes me so depressed." And yet we have to live with ourselves; so why not get at the task of making friends with ourselves. Let us face ourselves and see ourselves as we are and then ask God to make us over, and work in us the miracle of joy and peace. No great thing can be done without this inner peace; it is the price of power. To be alone without God is suicidal and all too many have found it true; but to be alone with our heavenly Father is like the radiance of the rising sun which chases away the shadows of night. Who of us dares meet this challenge? To put it in the words of Wordsworth,

> "Come forth, and bring with you a heart
> That watches and receives."

VIII

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

EPILOGUE BY ROBERT BROWNING.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LARGER REALM OF CHARACTER

The capacity of every individual to grow in character is as large as the world itself. "We are discovering," writes Canon Raven, "that the isolated individual is fit only for the madhouse; that personality involves and is perfected in fellowship, that development demands that the individual be social and society capable of bringing him to full stature; that the contrast between personal and corporate religion is false and destructive." In other words, it is not enough for any one of us to depend only upon his inner inspiration for a well-rounded character. God has put us into a world of complex life; therefore we must need the world or we would not be in it.

In this larger realm there are two sources of character: the Church, and the world of other personalities. Both are to us what the orchestra is to the individual musician. They offer the chance for harmony and unity of relationship and the creation of the great symphony. They reveal powers and possibilities beyond what an individual can do. A musician is poor indeed who listens only to his own playing and

never hears the great "Hallelujah Chorus" in which a thousand harmonies blend. And yet his own music may be full of melody. In the same way every one of us needs the Church, and the world full of different folk in order to attain our fullest growth.

There is a feeling to-day among thousands that so long as one lives according to his own conscience, he can withdraw from the Church or human society without harm. Some day we shall be rudely awakened to see that we have lost our greatest chance for character. "Let me walk in the fields and commune with nature," say some, "and that is all I need." Yes, we need that: everyone needs it; but that is only part of our need. We are a part of society and were made to dwell in it and we dare not ignore it.

There is another consideration we do well to face and that is the nature of the Church itself. Is it not that fellowship of those who find their life in Jesus Christ? Jesus is different from all other religious leaders who have brought truth to men. The Church is composed of those who believe that God is known in the person of Jesus Christ; that God is a Christlike God. As Doctor Case of Cambridge, England, points out: "God revealed in the crucified and risen Lord, Christ indistinguishable in Christian experience from God Himself, the Holy Spirit known and

experienced in the work of men's salvation—these are truths which were the common property of the early Church, and are still shared by that common Christian faith which is at once Evangelical and Catholic." Thus the Church becomes not a western, but a world institution, because it is the outward sign of those who see God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is not the Church member, but the soul of the Church, which matters most. It is as St. Paul said, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect, but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12). This is the real truth about the Church: it is the fellowship of those who have committed themselves to the life with God in Christ and are in the path which leads to Him. They are in training for that day when a resemblance to their Lord will begin to shine out in their lives. Some of us are apt to yield to the weakness of those whose emotion runs away with their judgment. They have some unhappy experience with someone who is a church member and hastily generalize from one particular and judge the whole Church by this personal experience. It needs the perspective of years to see the results of the working of God's spirit in the hearts of men.

The present state of Christianity, divided into conflicting groups, does not impress the world with the importance of the Church. As

many say, "Why take the Church seriously when there is no agreement about its real character or message?" Not alone is the Protestant community divided into varied sects but also the Catholic faith is divided into great branches, dating from early centuries, each equally certain that it has the authority of the apostolic age. To the average student in the Orient or Occident, none of them seems of transcendent importance. One has only to go to the holy city of Jerusalem on Good Friday, the anniversary of the day when Jesus Christ was crucified, to see how the conflict of ecclesiastical groups of the ancient Catholic Churches around the sacred spot blurs the central fact. If all this be true why is the Church important as a source of character?

Back of all this conflict, the great body of the Church is an expression of the universal hunger for God. This hunger is felt more in the group than in the individual. We all know the truth of this. A student alone may thirst for learning; but in the atmosphere of the university his thirst will be greater because of the power of the united enthusiasm and yearning of the student body. The air becomes electric with mental suggestion. In the same way we may pray in solitude; but in the atmosphere of the church, fragrant with the aspirations of the ages, and sacred with the recollected presence

of God, prayer opens unsuspected depths within us. We find ourselves enriched by the united fellowship of all.

The Church also reassures me that I am not eccentric in my faith. It is difficult not to waver in one's trust in God when one stands alone. Haunting doubts about the truth of one's personal convictions are likely to give anxiety. How can I be sure that I am not self-hypnotized or unique in my hunger for God? It is only when we stand in the great congregation of worshipping people that we are reassured there is reality in spiritual aspiration. The life of devotion takes on new values and new dimensions. Our ambition is spurred and we catch the fire of the united spirit of adoration.

But far more important than any of these reasons is the fact that the Church is the expression of the life-giving body of Christ. It is the continuation of that group of the disciples of Christ who, at His request, ate the bread as symbol of His body and drank the cup as symbol of His blood. Thus they become incarnate with His Spirit and embody in their hearts the same principle of suffering love, which is the very nature of God. There may be thousands for whom this is merely a form and not a transforming principle of life, but in the Church alone the sincere soul finds the chance to enter into oneness with the love that gave

itself for the life of the world. To be initiated into the fellowship of all those who desire to be one with their crucified Lord and Saviour, is a privilege we covet when Jesus is discovered by us. No differences of opinion about the interpretation of truth, or claims for authority, can destroy this central fact. There is no greater stimulus to character than this personal devotion to the life of sacrificial love and the discipline of bringing all powers of mind and heart slowly, but surely, under the sway of Jesus Christ.

The person of Jesus is so transcendently sublime, and human nature lags so far behind, that it is not to be wondered at that the Church throughout the ages has not shown the perfect balance of the character of Christ. It has made mistakes and come short of perfection, but its devotion to its Lord has not swerved. The fact that students fail to measure up to intellectual perfection does not argue that the university standards have fallen. It is not the weakness of Christ, but the stupidity of men, that has brought the Church into disrepute. It is still the way by which we become citizens of the Kingdom of God. Just as we are born into our earthly existence through the human family, so we are born into the heavenly realm through the spiritual family of the Church.

The Church is like a great school for the

training of those who are destined to become sons of God. Habits of prayer become fixed; our spiritual aspirations enlarge and take definite hold on us under the spell of the house of worship. The experience and wisdom of other Christians is made available through instruction and comradeship, one with another. The task of understanding spiritual mysteries is beyond the wisdom of any one of us and can only become realized through the years of religious education which the Church makes possible for us. We take a great step forward in character when we decide to make the Christian life our purpose and are committed to that which is highest and best. By the sacrament of baptism we become dedicated to Jesus Christ and His way of life. The Church may not be the perfect medium for the life of God, but it is the best medium that we know on earth for this purpose.

In spite of all this, we must reckon with the impatience of modern youth which looks upon the Church as an outworn institution incapable of meeting modern needs. One has only to listen to the "soap box" oratory in public outdoor meetings to hear impassioned young men speaking to the multitudes as one spoke recently: "Do not have anything to do with the Church. It can do nothing for you. It only stifles your freedom." And therein lies the key! What does

the average youth mean by freedom? Sometimes he means an independence of society. The rules of the game of living together he calls a restriction of his liberty. He does not go to a desert island, where he might be free, but insists on living in the social group and making it bend to his will.

Sometimes the desire for freedom means the right to disentangle oneself from the traditions of the past and evaluate all truth in terms of present need and knowledge of the world. No one is more sympathetic with this desire than Jesus Himself. It was His own attitude toward truth. No one will find himself cramped in his thinking who gets close to His mind through the Gospels. It is the only way in which progress comes. But we need to face what we really mean. Let us answer these questions honestly. Does my desire for freedom kindle a hatred of others and raise up class antagonisms? In my insistence on freedom am I equally concerned that others also shall be free—to think *differently* from me? Is it really freedom or the autocracy of my ideal that I seek? Perhaps we shall discover in ourselves a spirit that is opposed to the spirit of Jesus Christ. His challenge to His disciples was, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it." It is Jesus

who is the heart of the Church. It is not fitting that we ask in a patronizing air, "What can the Church do for me?" The question must be phrased otherwise.

An editorial in a newspaper a few months ago sensed the real challenge in its report of a youth movement conference on the Church. "What is the Church doing for our world which justifies us in bringing our zeal and vision, our faith and hope and energy, our college-trained minds to the support of its programme? What is the Church doing about the problem of human values in industry, of racial relations, of civil government, and war? How does it plan to remake society according to the Christ way of Life?" If any of us do want to see the principles of Jesus Christ operative in the life of today we shall find it easier to hasten that time if we work inside the Church rather than outside of it. The Church as a whole is more susceptible to the appeal of Jesus than any outside group could possibly be. It has never yet been vanquished through the ages, and it awaits the unselfish courage and vision of youth to help it to bring the ways of men under the sway of the selfless love of God. Let us be careful lest we fool ourselves by holding back because we are loth to measure up to the standards of our Lord and follow the way of the Cross. The real strength of character is revealed here. To

refer again to the newspaper editorial: "The Church needs what youth can bring to it, and the world needs a church which can answer bravely the challenge of youth."

If the Church is the power-house for the generation of spiritual energy and in which we can openly, in the sight of all, express our loyalty to the person of Christ, then the world outside becomes the laboratory for the demonstration of this energy. Life must express itself in some way, and what better way could be found than in the workshop of the world? Our real character shows itself here.

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who are the victims of circumstance and those who are victors over circumstance—those who are made by their environment and those who make their own environment. It is this fact that makes every loving parent tremble when his child goes away from home for the first time. The great question is about to be answered. Will the child be swept helplessly along, swayed by the force of other personalities, drifting on the tide; or is he so vital with the energy of God that he can conquer adverse conditions and transform them into glorious uses? It was said of a certain student that he burned a path of light through his university. Others in that same centre succumbed in weakness. What was the difference? They pitted their in-

dividual strength against life and found it too strong for them. The first boy had endless power flowing into him from his conscious connection with the life of God. "I can do all things," said Paul, "through Him that strengtheneth me."

Most of us long for an easy time free from struggle. We feel the strain of the competing forces, and if we were allowed to arrange the world we would want it so comfortable that our ease would never be disturbed. It would be the peace of stagnation like that of the pond which is never disturbed. Our end would be also like the pond which becomes covered with a green scum: its waters not fit to drink. God has planned the world so that struggle and effort are rewarded by strength of character. How dull life would be without the necessity for heroic effort. What makes a game interesting? Two equally strong teams competing for victory. What is the joy of the pioneer? Overcoming difficulties and arriving at the land of his desire. Hidden within the simple forms of nature fresh from the hand of God, are untold joys to be created by the painstaking search of man. God made an ear of corn, but coming from it are many more creations which God never made. Man's victory over nature has brought them forth. Oil, sugar, mattresses, alcohol, fertilizers—these and a score of others prove the way God blesses our faithful

working with him. The hard task of wresting all these benefits from nature develops untold strength and power.

When one stands before the mighty cataract of Niagara and sees its waters sweeping on faster than an express train, one wonders how God in His love dared place puny man in a world so full of the terrors of unharnessed nature and in the midst of destructive forces. Why was it? Because we are destined to become sons of God, and our powers develop out of the contests in this gymnasium of the world. From this comes experience and wisdom; but that is not all. The world is gradually conquered by us in so far as it is used for creative service. There is something in us that grows and achieves when we have taken the materials of the world and made them express the desire of our spirit. It is like the dignity and sense of personality that come to an artist when, from the use of colors, he has created a picture which expresses the vision of his spirit. We go from strength to strength by the milestones we carve out from the stuff of this world. It is the way we enter into a fellowship of understanding with other personalities. We add something to the values of the world in which we live and thus gain self-respect. This is why mere wealth brings degeneration if it is used only to remove us from the strain of working to create values.

It is only an aid to character when it represents to the possessor so many more tools with which to become a co-worker with God for the good of mankind. Every added resource we possess becomes a temptation to selfish desire, and when yielded to, wrecks our character. It takes a constant remembrance of Him, whose we are and whom we serve, to overcome the downward pull of mental or material riches. If our behavior is so largely determined by a sub-conscious response to our environment, as many psychologists aver, then we need to put all the conscious energy of our spirit to the task of following our Lord Christ step by step. All the more shall we need the environment of the Church to resist the trend to an ease-loving, non-creative life.

We do not stand still. We grow or degenerate. We feebly follow the social urge of the group of personalities which make up our world, or we become centres of vital influence beckoning them to follow the way of the spacious life. Then everything we touch, or work at, or influence, becomes transfigured by the radiance of that higher world where the way of Jesus is supreme.

If it were not possible to dominate the world we live in by the power of our spirit "tuning into" oneness with the eternal Spirit of our Father God, we would indeed be a mere bundle of reactions to the stimulus of our environment.

Such a state would free us largely from any responsibility for the making of character. But the powers of the Spirit cannot be searched by scalpel or laboratory test. Those powers are within us as a latent capacity, even though we are blind to them, and God will hold us responsible for their use. When Jesus said "Follow me," He meant that like Himself, we too should meet the issues of life on this earth with the powers of the spiritual realm. We were meant to live in two worlds at once. Our character is really determined by the attitude of mind which controls our reactions to our environment. The Christian is one who has adopted the Christ principle as his goal rather than the life of a chameleon which supinely takes on the colors of its environment.

There are many of us who would like to be free from the moral responsibility for our conduct. It seems simpler to regard ourselves as children of nature and helpless in the scheme of things. If this were really true then spiritual aspiration becomes a mockery. If water will not quench thirst, why should we be tantalized by the sight of it? If the victory of Jesus over the environment of earth is impossible for us, why was He ever manifested? It remains for us then to deny the facts and powers of His life on earth, or else to put His challenge to the test and, like His friends of old, rise up and follow

Him into that higher life where we become like Him. The vision of this is described by St. Paul when he writes to the Corinthians: "We all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as Himself, passing from one glory to another—for this comes of the Lord the Spirit."

IX

"The cry of earth's anguish went up unto God,—
'Lord take away pain from the world Thou hast made,
That it love Thee the more.'
Then answered the Lord to the world He had made,
Shall I take away pain?
And with it the power of the soul to endure
Made strong by the strain?
Shall I take away pity that knits heart to heart
And sacrifice high?
Will ye lose all your heroes who lift from the flame
White brows to the sky?
Shall I take away love that redeems with a price
And smiles through the loss,—
Can ye spare from the lives that would climb unto mine
The Christ on His Cross?"

ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHRISTIAN IN AN INESCAPABLE WORLD

Victor Hugo in symbolic words once painted a true picture of the Christian in the world. Would that it could be true of each of us!

> "Be like a bird, a moment lighted
> Upon a bough that swings:
> He feels it yield yet sings on unaffrighted
> Knowing he hath wings."

How often we have seen this in nature! The winds of winter sway the twig to which the slender claws of the bird cling. His feathers are ruffled and it seems as if he would be dashed to the ground, but he is not troubled. He knows he has wings and can fly from the unsteady branch beneath him. So he sings in spite of his unstable environment. We human beings, on the contrary, spend most of our time bemoaning the chill blasts of the world and say that circumstances are too hard for us; that we cannot endure life. We resent a world in which there are so many forces which may mean the destruction of our mortal bodies, forgetting the wings of God's Spirit within us. What does it all mean? What uses do the terrifying forces

inherent in the world serve? What is their relation to us?

We have seen that the principle that will guide us to limitless life is self-forgetting love; which means resisting the downward pull of earthly and selfish desires and paying the price of following Jesus through death to life. Neville Talbot in his recent book on the problem of suffering says, "Within sorrow is love; out of love it springs—were it not for love it would not be. Within doubt is faith; the energy of a questing faith is within it. Within sorrow for sin is a craving for goodness." Love always suffers if it is unselfish. The other day a man who dearly loved his dog even risked his own life gladly to save it from drowning. The choicest values of earth are somehow linked with suffering love. It may be a mystery but it is nevertheless a fact in experience. As soon as we resent suffering and inconvenience for those whose lives touch ours, relationships are broken and the glow of friendship fades into mummified indifference. There would be no rainbow if the sky did not include both storm and sunshine. And as one writer puts it, "The soul would have no rainbow had the eyes no tears." Such is the mysterious law of nature and human life.

The old proverb says, "Necessity is the mother of invention." The pressure of circumstance forces the spirit to find a way out. As

Charles Spurgeon said, "Many men owe the grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties." A certain manufacturer was losing money on his chief product because there was so much waste of unusable material. What was he to do? After long months of study in the laboratory, his scientific men discovered ways of salvaging the waste and creating new products that in time brought him far larger resources than the chief product had ever done. So it is with our spiritual life. Sometimes our greatest contribution to life comes from the pressure of suffering, as the wine flows from the crushed grapes. Take for example John Milton. He became blind and could see no more of the earthly beauty of England's loveliness. Instead of giving up in despair, he said, "I argue not against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot of heart, or hope; but still bear up and steer right onward." And his spirit was rewarded by the vision of *Paradise Lost* which he embodied in immortal words. Again, look at John Bunyan. He was imprisoned unjustly in Bedford jail and unable to walk through England's pleasant fields. But he saw a vision of Christian's walk through the world and wrote the great classic *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by which he will ever live in the minds of men. Then, too, there was Beethoven, the great musician, on whom befell the tragedy of deafness. He could not hear the

sounds of harmony. Yet with this limitation, his spirit caught the heavenly beauty of the *Moonlight Sonata* and gave it for the joy of the world. These and countless instances show us that though the very earth rocks, we can sing like the little bird and triumph by the power of our spirit.

It is the law of contrast by which we get our sense of beauty and holiness—

> "Before your eyes can see a star,
> There must be darkness where you are:
> Before your songs with joy can ring,
> Standing in sorrow you must sing."

Beauty is proportion and harmony of line, color, and quality of soul, as we see it in contrast with whatever does not possess these qualities. The beauty of holiness shines out in contrast with sin, and vulgarity of living. We bow in awe before the love of God after we have had experience with the selfish greed of men. Appreciations are dependent on contrasts. This is why some people who live in lands of tropical sunshine cease to appreciate it, and even long for a rainstorm. Wealth often bores its possessors who have striven all their days to obtain it only to find that contrasts in life are the chief source of our genuine enthusiasms.

There are some people who go through life with few appreciations. They look for some

one thing they are seeking and see nothing else. Everything that is other than what they have set their hearts upon is regarded as an obstacle to their life. Countless travellers who have made American comforts their one aim in life go touring over the world and see nothing but the lack of their accustomed luxuries. All the voices of history, beauty, art, new experience, wide horizons and contacts with people unlike themselves fall on deaf ears. Year by year their souls shrivel and life grows increasingly empty. They have been unwilling to face contrasts in life, or to widen their appreciations of life's values with its countless appeals. The true Christian accepts life as it is in all its variableness and grows strong and big in soul from meeting everything with utter trust in the God of love who is behind it all. He believes with childlike faith in the conclusion of St. Paul: "What can ever part us from Christ's love? Can anguish or calamity or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger of the sword? . . . No, in all this we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8: 35–37).

Growth, which is a law of life, means change, and the task of making things work together for the realization of our ideal. Along a certain wooded path stands a beautiful tree, young, lithe, and ever pushing upward and outward.

On top of the ground from which it sprang is a great boulder split in two by the tender yet determined life of the tree. It was drawn by the sun; and the capacity for upward growth conquered the pressure of earth and rock. It was undaunted by opposing forces in its divine capacity to grow. If a tree can do this in nature, how much more are we able to fulfil the purpose of God for us, when in addition to our puny strength, the strength of God Himself is always available if we will connect with it by an outreaching spirit. And we go from strength to strength. The struggle of a baby to walk and talk fits it for the larger tasks of study in school, and later for grappling with the hard facts of life. As Walt Whitman puts it, "It is provided in the essence of things, that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth *something* to make a greater struggle necessary." Why not accept life, then, as it is, and push forward knowing that our Father, who loves us, sees endless values for us in the conflicting forces of life, or He would not have put us here. One gains nothing by sitting down supinely and quarrelling with life. Let us grow and spell it with these words, "*Go Right On Working.*"

The richness of our character and the full picture of the Christian life come from the application of the law of self-forgetting love to all

the challenges of life. It was this universal demonstration that made the pagan world gasp in amazement at the difference between the early Christians and themselves. The great Athenian orator Aristides described the early followers of Jesus Christ to Emperor Hadrian as follows: "The Christians know and trust God, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whom are all things and from whom are all things and who has no other God beside Him. . . . They do not worship idols made in human form, and whatever they do not wish that others should do to them, they do not to others. . . . They placate those who oppress them and make them their friends, they do good to their enemies. Their wives are absolutely pure, and their daughters modest. Their men abstain from every unlawful marriage and from all impurity in the hope of future recompense. If any of them have bondwomen or children they persuade them to become Christians for the love that they have toward them; and when they become so, they call them without distinction, brothers. . . . They love one another. They do not refuse to help the widows. They rescue the orphan from him who does him violence. He who has gives ungrudgingly to him who has not. If they see a stranger, they take him to their dwellings and rejoice over him as over a real brother; for they do not call themselves broth-

ers after the flesh but after the spirit and in God. . . . If any one among them is poor and needy and they do not have food to spare they fast two or three days that they may supply him with the necessary food. They scrupulously obey the commands of their Messiah. . . . Every morning and every hour they thank and praise God for his loving kindness toward them; and for their food and drink they give thanks to Him. As men who know God they ask from Him what is proper for Him to give and for them to receive. Thus they do throughout their entire life. And inasmuch as they acknowledge the loving kindness of God toward them, lo, because of them there flows forth all the beauty that is in the world. But the good deeds which they do they do not proclaim in the ears of the multitude, but they take care that no one shall perceive them. They hide their gift as one who has found a treasure hides it. Thus they labor to become righteous as those who expect to see their Messiah and to receive from him the glorious fulfillment of the promises made to them. Truly this is a new people and there is something divine in them."

The glory of the early Christians lay in their acceptance of life as it was and dealing with all of it in the spirit of love. They did not blame God for conditions but accepted all circumstances as a challenge to the life of love—and

met it. We cannot change the world and make it fit our desires; but we can change ourselves and thereby release a new force which will transform the world. It is a divine force because it enables us to triumph over circumstances. St. John knew this secret from Jesus and writes: "Everyone who believes Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. . . . Whatever is born of God, conquers the world. Our faith, that is the conquest which conquers the world." The only thing that can convince the world of the reality of the unseen power of God's spirit within us is its transforming power. When people see an enemy becoming a friend, despair turning to joy, trust conquering fear, and love replacing selfishness, they can explain it only as Aristides did, "there is something divine in them." And when we see our hearts beating with the rhythm of this divine life, we, too, know that we have passed from death to life. There is no greater joy possible than to discover our spiritual wings by which we can fly as free spirits in God's universe. How can we help singing! St. Paul writes: "I once estimated Christ by what is external, I no longer estimate him thus. There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be born in Christ; what is old is gone, the new has come. It is all the doing of God" (II Corinthians 5:16–18).

Much of our depression about the pain of life

comes through our own fault. Glenn Clark has said that we attract not the condition we ask or expect but the condition we *are*. We call forth the response to the overflow of our own soul. When we look at things and let them influence us to a spirit of fear we live in darkness. When we look at Jesus Christ and rebound with his spirit of faith we turn darkness to light. We waste years on useless things because we will not look up instead of looking down. If we smile, the world smiles with us; if we weep, we generally weep alone. Napoleon once said, "Circumstances? I make circumstances": and there is much truth in this.

Then, too, the simple act of fitting into life's natural rhythms would save much suffering. How heavy our tasks look at night; and how much more possible they are in the morning after our sleep. Much of sickness and pain is due to our breaking of nature's rhythm. Sleep, exercise, work and the proper food, in which the necessary elements are well-balanced, are part of our moral responsibility. We cannot blame God for the results if we break nature's laws. Countless people die from heart disease brought on by ignoring the relation between work and rest. This is due to our grasping desire to heap up more resources than we need for simple living. Sometimes we suffer through ignorance; but year by year, we are discovering secrets by

which our mortal bodies can be kept in health and free from pain. If we have a childlike, teachable mind we can reap a greater and greater harvest of peace and joy for our years on earth.

All this, however, does not remove all pain from our life. The gradual wasting away of bodily strength, and the pain of separation from our friends who pass beyond the vale of death, are part of every experience. How can we fling high our spirit at such times? We may well follow the thinking of Peter, the great leader of the disciples of Jesus, who suffered much for the faith. He has the long look forward to the sure joy of a resurrection like that of Jesus, and to an "unfading inheritance" awaiting us in the world to come. He sees in suffering the preparation for that joy, even as an athlete practices in a gymnasium for the time when he shall be victorious in the great game. Thus he writes: "Rejoice then, though for the passing moment you may need to suffer various trials; that is only to prove your faith is sterling (far more precious than gold, which is perishable and yet is tested by fire), and it redounds to your praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. You never knew Him, but you love Him; for the moment you do not see Him, but you believe in Him, and you will thrill with an unspeakable and glorious joy to obtain the out-

promises, according to certain people's idea of slowness; no, he is longsuffering for your sake, he does not wish any to perish but all to betake them to repentance" (II Peter 3:8–9). Time, as someone has said, consists of punctuation marks which we put into the history of eternity so that we can locate ourselves. God is willing to wait in love, as the father waited for his prodigal son to reduce himself to the point of eating husks with swine before "he came to himself and said I will arise and go to my father." We are not puppets but free spirits, and God does not compel us but loves until we are drawn of our free will to come to Him. Instead of being impatient, as the elder brother of the prodigal was, over the haste and havoc others are making, we, too, must trust the wisdom of our Father God, and yearn as He yearned to see the returning hearts no matter how long the delay. God does not compel anyone to choose the best in life. The glory of our humanity lies in its freedom to decide for itself. This naturally brings about a world of varied ideals and opposing interests. It is a part of the process of growth; for the making of free sons of God.

If we have truly come to ourselves and made our choice for God, as we see Him in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we know that we have victory over all pain, suffering, and opposing forces by meeting them as Jesus met

them. With God we blaze the trail to glory. St. Paul made the choice and won his fight and wrote toward the end of his life from the pain of a Roman prison, "Work all the more strenuously at your salvation with reverence and trembling, for it is God who in His good will enables you to will this, and to achieve it. In all that you do, avoid grumbling and disputing so as to be . . . faultless children of God in a crooked and perverse generation where you shine like stars in a dark world" (Phil. 2: 12–15). Our reward is twofold. The life of God fills our life just as the sun fills a room when the windows are open. It drives out the powers of darkness and gives us the joyous victory of spirit. The glow of the divine spirit within us is felt by others and makes us guiding stars for others who stumble in darkness. We have thus the supreme joy of becoming saviours of men and thereby fulfilling the word of Jesus when He prayed, "As Thou hast sent me into the world, so have I sent them into the world."

A world of hardship makes heroes. A hero is one who conquers the seemingly unconquerable. He counts not his life dear to himself, but for love's sake risks everything for the goal of his desire. Jesus, the supreme hero, embraced death for a transcendent goal: to prove that death may become the gate to life and that

we, by following Him, may be delivered from fear of death and win eternal life. It meant the fiercest conflict with pain and suffering all His life. How can we follow Him and be heroes if there are no foes to fight, no pains to bear, no opposing forces to conquer! The pain in our experience is our supreme opportunity of becoming more than conquerors through Him who loves us. It is our one way of proving our strength. A young doctor became restless and impatient during the first months of his practice because no one came to him with anything but a slight illness. He longed for a really desperate case to prove to the community his skill as a physician. We can talk eloquently about the love of God and his power, but the world will not take our words seriously until it sees us tested, and triumphant, over fearful odds. It is this call to the heroic which fans into flame the ambition of youth. Every youth has an inner urge to become a hero. What greater rewards are there than to dare to adventure all for the mastery of death by the eternal qualities of life? How our love of ease has dulled the great issues!

After all has been said, the whys and wherefores of pain will remain a divine mystery. The secret to an understanding of it lies in our looking at it not as an end in itself but as a means to an end, as the earthly shadow of a joyous

reality. The bulb is buried in the cold, dark ground as the means by which the hidden life within it may burst into the riotous beauty of color and perfume in the garden of sunshine. The agony of womankind is the minor prelude to the major joy of bringing forth the child of one's love. The darkness of night does not affright us because we know the beauty of the sunrise is soon to dawn. The pain of losing our loved one is as nothing compared with the ecstasy of the heavenly reunion where partings are no more. The sculptor of Alexander the Great hid the scar on his forehead by the shadow of his hand. So the scars of our struggle are hidden beneath the almighty Hand that makes and shelters us.

The inescapable world is indeed a shadow. It can be met in two ways. While reading in a garden, a dark shadow fell across the page. Instead of brooding over its mystery and resenting it, the reader lifted her eyes and looked into the face of her long-absent lover, the loving reality which had projected the shadow. Again a shadow falls, and perchance the fault is ours because we have turned our back on the light of the sun. It is this truth that has made King David's experience the comfort of all mankind when he sings of God's shepherding of his life,

> "He guides me by true paths,
> as He himself is true.

My road may run through a
glen of gloom.
But I fear no harm, for thou
art beside me."

X

"I fled Him down the nights and down the days:
I fled Him down the arches of the years,
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind: and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
From those strong feet, that followed, followed after.

But with unhurrying chase
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy
They beat—and a voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
All things betray thee, who betrayed Me.

. . . . . .

Alack thou knowest not
How little worthy of my love thou art.
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save me—save only me?

. . . . . .

Halts by me that footfall,
Is my gloom then after all
Shade of His hand outstretched caressingly?
Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest
Thou dravest love from thee—who dravest Me."

FROM "THE HOUND OF HEAVEN" BY FRANCIS THOMPSON.

CHAPTER X

THE PERSONAL RELATION WITH GOD

The authority of truth must be confirmed by experience if it is to have compelling power in our life. All that we have said about God as He is revealed through Jesus Christ means little to us unless we can verify it in our own life adventure. I must have a personal experience with God, as Jesus had, or I cannot believe in the reality of His love for me. I, as a person, must have personal contacts.

A writer speaking of the spirit of youth says, "In the central place of your heart there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, grandeur, courage, and power, from the earth, from men and from the Infinite, so long you are young. When the wires are all down and all the central place of your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism then you are grown old indeed and may God have mercy on your soul." This is true. The vitality of our personality depends on the reality of these relationships with other life. The response of the heart to what we love creates in us what we call worship. Profes-

sor Wieman, the psychologist, defines it thus, "Worship is opening of mind or spirit toward the beneficent aspect of the Universe which the definition calls God." This is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. The opening of our mind and heart toward what is good is not satisfying unless God is something more than a beneficent aspect of the Universe! An "aspect" is impersonal. I am personal, with a capacity for love which can only be satisfied by the response of personal love. An impersonal relationship is like intercession to the Sphinx. The God I look up to in worship must be all that I am and infinitely more. I must in some way be able to come into his presence, where soul responds to soul.

Professor Herbert Willett meets the question that so many people ask these modern days: "Does it seem a limitation of deity to call it personal? It may be that our definitions are too small. We do not yet know much even of human personality. But of one thing we may be sure: Jesus knew more of God than any other who has passed this way, and to Him he was Father, personal and precious. . . . More than personal, God may be, and the centuries must have larger knowledge and new vocabularies for expression. But less than personal He cannot be to any who are minded to give Jesus the final word." The only way to know the truth

of this is to open our mind and heart to God in worship and prove in experience what never can be proved by mere argument. One must love color and live with it and create a landscape in order to understand it. Let all who will scoff at worship; but under this pessimism one always sees a shrivelled, impotent soul. What a contrast to the experience of Moses of whom we read, "The Eternal would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend"; after which he was able to do the impossible and build up a mass of slaves into a nation that led the world in moral standards, and rose to heights of purer worship of a personal God of justice and mercy than was ever attained by any other people; and from whom Jesus came.

We need not argue over the validity of the anthropomorphic conception of God, like to a human man in form. Under the beauty of the Eastern imagery lies the truth so basic to our Christian faith, that the unseen God inspires our thinking, directs our will toward creative living, and moves the depths of our heart with a love that leaves us silent in awe, wonder and thanksgiving. This was the constant experience of Jesus, and countless millions of Christians, who have worshipped the God of love and borne witness to its reality by word and triumphant life. The testimony to the experiences of a personal relation with God covers so many cen-

turies, and temperaments, and races; and has been true for old and young, saints and sinners, the aspiring and the baffled, that one dares not deny the truth of it before paying the price of a personal adventure in worship. The first requirement an adventurer must have is faith. The writer of the Hebrews begins the famous catalogue, of those who wrought by faith the mightiest deeds of Israel, by defining faith thus: "Now faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see. It was for this that the men of old won their record. . . . Apart from faith it is impossible to satisfy Him (God) for the man who draws near to God must believe that He exists and that He does reward those who seek Him" (Heb. 11:1–2, 6). In the words of modern psychology, faith is the organizing of all our personal powers, active and latent, around our supreme goal, and stretching out to grasp it. This is the perfect focus or integration that releases all our power. And this must be the attitude we take toward the unseen God whom we long to know through personal experience. St. Paul knew the faith when he wrote: "I count anything a loss, compared to the supreme value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have lost everything (I count it all veriest refuse) in order to gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8). Let us ask ourselves now at the very threshold

of worship if we are willing to pay the price of this faith. It is a matter of deliberate decision. Who is willing to take the heroic step?

The rewards of a personal relation with God come from two sources. First, in the realm of our inner life as we face God in the solitariness of our soul. Second, in the relation of our inner self to the social group of kindred minds who represent what we describe as the Church. Any worship which brings into play all our faculties and releases all our possibilities must be both individual and social.

There are six great spiritual realities which become ours through the experience of individual worship. No one can live a satisfying life without them. The first comes through the act called contemplation. In this we let our minds dwell on the goal of our faith, the nature of God, and character of Him whom we desire to know. Through the teaching of Jesus we get the true picture of God. He is Father, and we can dwell on all that can mean in the highest sense. He is love, giving Himself freely that we may be protected and saved for an eternal home with Him. The purity of the sunlight is His; the powers of the universe are in His hands; the beauty of the world is the work of His hands; the tender understanding of His heart is beyond any mother we have known. His holiness is white as snow; His joy is like

music and the harmony of the spheres. The vastness of the universe is God's home; and yet He sorrows over the stains of sin that spot the life of the humblest child in the world. He cannot rest until the last little lost lamb is home, safe from the storm. As we contemplate this God, who is our Father, we get a true sense of value, and all our boasted pride and egotism melts away, and we become humble and childlike before Him. In contemplating our heavenly Father we become aware of our child relationship with Him.

The second experience comes when the light of God's love dawns on our hearts and we see the disorder and shabbiness of our inner life, and the chains of evil habits that hold us captive. Can the God who made the world set us free? Can He forgive our blindness and self-will and impurity? The experience of those who think on God's love verifies the song of David when he faced his sin: "He (God) treats us not according to our sins, He deals not with us as our guilt deserves; but, high as heaven is over the earth, so vast His love is to His worshippers; far as the east is from the west, so far He puts our sins away from us. As a father pities his children, so the Eternal pities His worshippers; He knows what we are made of. He remembers we are dust" (Psalm 103: 10–13). Dare we now believe this as we see our-

selves in contrast with God's holiness? Has forgiveness even been a reality to us? It may be now as the joyous experience resulting from our worship.

The third reality is a conscious dedication of ourselves to do the will of God. Doctor Karl Barth in his book *The Word of God, and the Word of Man* says of us who live in the modern world, "We have gone no further than to play sleepily with shadow pictures of the divine righteousness. . . . We have prayed 'Thy will be done,' and meant by it, Thy will be done not just now." Such an attitude means unreality; but if we have given time to personal worship and entered into the joy of the sense of forgiveness, then we shall have discovered the truth of what Doctor Barth describes when he says: "His will is not a corrected continuation of our own. It approaches ours as a wholly other." It is made up of purity, goodness, truth, and brotherhood. We are now on a new trail for a new adventure into a new realm.

Having exchanged our smoked glasses for those of crystal purity, the whole world inspires us with its new beauty and possibility. Inspiration is what we need, the still small voice of God within, the breathing into us the spirit of the Christ. Our experience in life is not enough: we need to worship in contemplation of the teachings of Jesus, and the experiences

of His disciples who followed in His steps. Therefore we open our Bible and let our humbled, forgiven, dedicated spirit receive the illumination of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. It will inspire us to ideals beyond our dream, and to life, by the laws of the Spirit.

The fifth reality of our personal relationship to God is the sense of guidance. "Lord what will Thou have me do?" will be our constant prayer; and again the experience of men of old, who knew God, will be ours. We too shall hear the still small voice of God saying: "I will bring the blind upon their way, guiding them by paths they never knew, I will turn darkness into light before them, and the rough places into a plain. This will I do, I promise, I will not leave it undone" (Isaiah 42: 16). And, as a little child, we live joyously, knowing that our heavenly Father will never fail. This confidence alone is worth all the price of worship. What mistakes we make when we plan our life, and how we live in uncertainty and regret, while the furrows of care line themselves more deeply on our brows. We do not need to live thus; over and over Jesus said: "Your Father knoweth that ye have need." To believe this so deeply that every day proves the reality of this faith, is to bring God infinitely near. Try it and prove its truth here and now.

The sixth experience is an experience in in-

tercession. When we see what worship is doing for us, we begin to think of those whom we love, who need all we have needed. Almost unconsciously we begin praying for them and find ourselves longing to show them what our eyes have seen. The Spirit of God is too great to be shut up within us. Because He is love, He longs to give the secret of life to others; our lips, our hands, our feet are now His. He uses us to interpret Himself to those who cannot see Him only as He lives through us. Some one has said that our life is the only Bible that hosts of people ever read. One of the last times the risen Lord was visible to His disciples, He said: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me forth, I am sending you forth." And with these words He breathed on them and added, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20, 21–23). This is our great career. Thus we follow in His steps and give freely as we have received. We dare not sin against the love of God.

In all these provable ways, the nearness and love of God becomes real to us each day. But the reality stretches out beyond our own individual relation to God. It is enriched by the social values of worship with others through the common fellowship of the Church. These were realized by Jesus, and explain his keeping the disciples together as a group, and the beginning of the Church. In spite of the fact that

countless people disdain it, the Church has survived because it has brought Jesus Christ intimately near to the true worshipper, and opened to him spiritual realities not possible to individual worship alone. Among her enemies are those who oppose the Church because she does not lend herself as a world organization to all the social readjustments that people long to see accomplished by civic law. Others war against the Church because she has yielded to the temptation of temporal power and forgotten the spiritual trust which Jesus committed to her. Church history through the centuries is depressing reading; and yet for all her shortcomings the Church stands, and will stand, because she alone releases certain spiritual realities in the life of every humble disciple who seeks them. Let us look at these gifts that bring us new experience in our personal relation with God.

The psychological laws of the group bring certain realities to each member associated with it. Mental insight and discernment come as a result of a company of minds focussed on one subject. The thinking of all enriches the thinking of each. The aspiration of all fires the desire of every member. We attempt greater adventures when a whole company aspires to them than when we stand alone. In the matter of worship this reality is intensified. Jesus ex-

pressed this in his words to His disciples: "If two of you agree on earth about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in Heaven. For where two or three have gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18: 19–20).

We see this verified again and again in the lives of the disciples. Two of them walk to Emmaus, deep in talk about the mystery of the death of Jesus. A stranger joins them, their hearts burn within them as he talks to them—and lo, he is revealed to them a little later as the real presence of the living Lord. Frightened and baffled the eleven disciples meet in an upper room with doors shut. Again the living presence of Jesus appears in their midst and speaks peace. Many experiences to-day, too sacred to utter to an indifferent, materially-minded world, give spiritual proof of the real and intimate nearness and power of our Lord manifested to groups in His Church who worship in faith and self-forgetting love. These treasures are gifts to those who pay the price of oneness with God, just as certain experiences of heart come to true lovers alone. They are not illusions but illuminations that are related to facts. We have not begun to fathom the powers that may be released by kindred minds that are focussed on one supreme goal. The miracle of a world-wide Church, born from an unpopular group of

eleven ordinary men, is related to this power of the united fellowship.

Why do we have colleges and libraries instead of leaving the individual to get his education by self-effort alone? Because our world is so complex that it takes the wisdom of all to fit each of us for understanding life. Our ideas gain importance as we see them confirmed by the thinking and experience of others. So it is in worship. We need the teaching of those more experienced than we are. We get courage to conquer temptations when we see that others have had to meet the same circumstances and have won. The test of all preaching in the Church is whether it moves the hearts of the hearers to worship and sends them out with a new sense of the reality of the love and nearness of God. If this is not true then the Church fails in her trust.

Even though the teaching of modern leaders fails to set our hearts athrill with devotion to our Lord, there still remains the inspiration of past experience. The beauty of the Church itself bears witness to the lofty aspiration of those who expressed it in wood, stone, and color. Hundreds of hymns voice the reality of men and women like ourselves who burst into praise over the spiritual realities they found in their relation with their Lord. We are lifted upon the wings of their experience. The ritual, and

reading from the scriptures, is pregnant with new life and vision for all who fix their attention upon it, and the very atmosphere is made holy with the prayers of countless worshippers who lived in triumph and have gone to eternal joys. No one can afford to detach himself from the sacred associations lest he impoverish his soul of these spiritual realities. They can be found nowhere else save in such fellowship with Christ's disciples. As Kipling well says,

> "God gives all men all earth to love,
> But, since man's heart is small,
> Ordains for each one spot shall prove
> Beloved over all."

The Church is the living company of human souls who are making the great adventure into the realm of Jesus Christ. We dare not part from them without losing the trail. Every quality in the heart of God is no longer a theory but a reality when we see it through some human relationship with those who are struggling Godward.

At the heart of the Church is the Sacrament of Holy Communion which Jesus Christ instituted with His disciples at His last supper with them. It was the one request He made of His followers, that they should continue this celebration as a lasting memorial of Him and His unique relationship to humanity. In it are em-

bodied the spiritual secrets of the Christian faith. We read in the Gospels: "For in the night in which He was betrayed, Jesus took bread; and when He had given thanks He brake it and gave it to His disciples saying, Take, eat, this my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper He took the cup; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me." There is no spot on earth where one can come into closer relationship with our Lord than through these outward symbols which Jesus chose to reveal the reality of His presence. They are full of holy suggestion which lead the spirit into deepest experiences.

The sacrament of Communion compels us to renew our pledge of loyalty to our oneness with our Lord. Through it we accept the sacrificial principle for our life, and make it our own by receiving the symbols of His body and blood into our very body, thus identifying our life with His self-forgetting love. The bread and the wine in themselves are evidence of our union with God. He brought the wheat to harvest and we made the bread; His creative power brought grapes from the vine but man trod out

the wine. We work together with Him. The bread and wine also are symbols of the incarnation. As the Word became flesh and dwelt among us in the visible form of Jesus—God manifesting Himself in material form—so when Jesus takes the bread and wine and says, "This is my body, this is my blood," He means that His spiritual presence is in these outward symbols and through them we become intimately one with Him.

In the address to the people at Capernaum, Jesus said these words, which even His disciples could not understand: "Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:54–55). By the habit of obedience to the request of our Lord through this memorial sacrament which He entrusted to the Church, we open our lives to the incoming of His life until we too become transformed into the same divine life which can never die. It is also a perpetual call to us to turn from sin and all that crucifies our Lord afresh or puts Him to open shame. His sacrificial love cleanses us from all past sin and all present desire to sin. Many may read these words and say, "This is a mystery." Yes, it is the mystery which unites things which are seen

with what is unseen. But that is the great adventure and in the Church alone we reach through the symbol to the spiritual reality we seek. It is the way Jesus chose for us, and we dare not neglect it if we are pressing on to know Him.

Our adventure with the Church for spiritual reality also leads us to the rewards of relationship with our fellow Christians through which our knowledge of our Lord is enlarged. Have you not noticed this truth in your daily life? You may have a dozen friends who love you. As you think of your relations with each of them you realize, do you not, that each one of them sees a different you: each calls out a different side of your personality. It takes all these revelations of ourselves reflected in our different friends to get the perfect picture of ourselves. So with our spiritual fellowship with other Christians; we see ourselves as we are, and get different gleams of our Lord incarnate in them. Therefore we dare not ignore one child in our Father's house. They will all differ, but if Christ has even the tiniest hold in their hearts, we must reverence them. Long ago a Sufi utterance, translated by Professor Browne, put this truth into poetic words:

"Beaker or flagon, or bowl or jar,
Clumsy or slender, coarse or fine;

However the potter may make or mar,
All were made to contain the wine;
Should we this one seek or that one shun,
When the wine which gives them their worth is one?"

To apply the law of self-forgetting love to every member of the Church, which is the body of Christ, is so hard for most of us that we miss the deepest unity with our Lord. We love our opinions more than we love the total revelation of Christ. We talk about the love of God, but shrink from experiencing it as a reality. As Edwin Markham puts it,

"He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win;
We drew a circle that took him in."

It takes the vision of all the children of God to begin to approach the real greatness of Christ; and even then it will take an eternity to complete the picture. If our hearts are too hard to find room for the revelations of our Lord that different minds discover, how shall we ever approach the greatness of His person in the world to come? This is a challenge our Lord makes to us in the Church. He knew how hard it would be and therefore prayed "That they may be made perfectly one, so that the world may recognize that Thou has sent me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me"

(John 17–23). It is love of all God's children that proves to the world that we are in a higher realm of life than the animal plane.

The word love as Jesus used it is described by Bishop Westcott as "an expression of character determined by will and not of spontaneous natural emotion. Love is the willing communication to others of that which we have and are —the exact opposite of that passion which is the desire of personal appropriation." It does not mean that they will be like us, but will be one with us in devotion to our Lord, who is greater than any poor human vision we may have of Him. Someone has said, "All men are worth knowing: some that we may emulate the good in them, and others that we may avoid the mistakes they make." Thus we may get wisdom from everyone, and come to know the reality and power of love through service of others and discipline in unselfishness. When this spirit becomes truly the instinctive life within us, we shall have an experience of the joy of Christ's nearness to us that nothing can deny or take away from us.

Thus the personal relation with God is proved in our conscious inner self through these varied paths. All of life then becomes full of holy associations. God is not far away from our life but within every aspect of it, just as beauty is within the heavens and in the design of a tiny

snowflake. And the beauty of the Lord God is waiting for those who will discover it. Let us begin the quest now, within our heart, and within the hearts of others; within the Church and within the world. The promise has been verified by all who have adventured sincerely. For the voice of God in the hearts of His children has proved true.

"Pray to me and I will answer you; seek me and you shall find me; when you seek for me with all your heart, I will reveal myself to you."

XI

"To vision of that one Power which guides the world
How should men find it?
Only through those doors,
Which opening inward in each separate soul
Give each man access to that soul of all
Living within each life, not to be found or known,
Till looking inward, each alone meets the unknowable
and Eternal God."

ALFRED NOYES.

"Ask and the gift will be yours,
seek and you will find
knock and the door will open to you.

if for all your evil you know to give your
children what is good, how much more will
your Father give the Holy Spirit from heaven
to those who ask him?
When the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you
into all the truth . . . he will draw upon what
is mine and disclose it to you."

WORDS OF JESUS.

CHAPTER XI

THE RATIONAL USE OF PRAYER

Prayer is the most talked about and least used force in the world. And yet it is the distinguishing mark of a human being that he instinctively reaches out to the infinite Spirit. As Browning puts it:

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That will nourish a blind life in the brain
If knowing God they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those whom they call friend?"

The instinct to reach out to God in prayer would not be such a universal characteristic of humanity were there not some real possibility for satisfying it. Christina Rossetti exclaims,

"Were there no God, we would be in this glorious world with grateful hearts: and no one to thank."

Even though some scientific minds assert that response to prayer cannot be proved, that does not cover the situation. If God could be searched out with scalpel and found in the labo-

ratory, He would not be Spirit. Human anatomy does not explain the spirit in man which is the most important part of him. Prayer is a communion of spirit with Spirit, and its laws are spiritual and not material. It is in the realm of thinking, feeling, and willing that the experience is verified.

The wave length by which human prayer travels to the heart of God is self-forgetting love, which goes out in joyous abandon to God and in sympathetic concern for one's fellowmen. No other wave length reaches God. As Evelyn Underhill says, "When the love of God is reached, divergences become impossible, for the soul has passed beyond the sphere of the manifold and is immersed in the one Reality." This is a spiritual law which transcends all differences of religious opinion in East or West. Professor Wieman voices the same counsel for those who would find spiritual guidance from God: "Let him lay aside every desire or anxiety for himself, waiting (if necessary for months or years) until he be entirely clear that the Voice or Intuition within him is no other than Universal Love which ever waits each man's surrender to it. In this experience he will find his anchor hold on God." By this we see that love is not a sentiment, but an experience and a directed will.

If we have this love really within us, then the

next condition for prayer is solitude. Professor Whitehead writes: "You cannot abstract society from man. But all the collective emotions leave untouched the awful, intimate fact, which is the human being consciously alone with itself, for its own sake. . . . Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness. Thus religion is solitariness: and if you are never solitary, you are never religious. . . . Connection between universality and solitariness is because universality is a disconnection from immediate surroundings." As soon as we shut the door on the outer world, our spirit is freed from the chains of circumstance and free to explore the universe. "No great thing could be dreamed or done," says Lowell, "if chosen souls could never be alone." And yet the modern world shuns solitude and fears it. It is one of the chief reasons why religion has ceased to be a reality to such multitudes. They are bent on the material world which they can touch, see, and handle. To such, prayer will ever remain an unexplored country.

After our adventures into solitude the next task is to attain concentration. Concentration is not tenseness of the nerves and senses, but perfect relaxation with a listening mind. Relaxation opens the eyes to see the whole horizon. When we are nervously tense we see only that which causes tenseness, and miss the whole

sense of perspective and relative values. When we are relaxed we are at leisure from ourselves, and can point our mind toward God, and others. We become alert and our blood circulation becomes normal. The relaxation must be physical, mental and spiritual. A restful posture is essential. Also we must relax our mental cocksureness, our adamant convictions, our demands on God, our autocracy. Our spirit must also let go of its antagonisms and the critical disposition. We must relax our selfishness and our depression. It may take only five minutes or five hours to achieve this, but any struggle is well worth while if only we can win this spiritual state where the concentration of a listening mind and heart is possible. Here again listening has four essential qualities. It must reach out in expectant faith; it must have a waiting trust; it must be willing to be connected with any need that may be revealed; and there must be a conscious connection with the God of the universe, just as our lungs are connected with the ozone of heaven and breathe it in naturally and quietly.

Quite apart from the experience of prayer there is nothing which brings more vitality to our bodies and strength to our nerves than this act of concentration in solitude. Hundreds of sick bodies would be restored if we practiced this habit. It may take months and years to

attain it as an instinctive experience, but no price is too great to pay for this. It is what Jesus meant by telling us we must turn and become like a little child, or we cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

"As a little child relies
On a strength beyond his own
Knows he's neither strong nor wise
Fears to take one step alone,
Thus let me with Thee abide
As my Father, Friend, and Guide."

Herbert Spencer once said, "Whatever amount of power an organism expends in any shape is the correlate or equivalent of a power that was taken into it from without." We know this is true physically because our nervous energy depends upon the food that is taken into our bodies from without. So with our mind. It becomes educated in proportion to the amount of discovered wisdom it absorbs. Our spiritual flabbiness is due to our failure to take into our inner life the spiritual strength that comes to the soul that prays. That most divine gift of human personality, the imagination, was meant to help us to visualize spiritual realities. When our heart and mind is listening in concentration, then our imagination should begin to picture the content of those words with which Jesus described God. Let us picture Him as

Father, as Light, Truth, Purity, Creator of Life's possibilities, understanding Friend, Lover of our soul, and Wisdom and Power. As our open, listening mind explores the ranges of the character of our Christlike God, the reality of what we picture will envelop our inner self until we are silent in wonder, love, and praise.

We then begin to see ourselves and our needs in the light of God's glory, and by contrast realize how much we need cleansing, and help, and renewal of spirit. Then the work Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would do within us and for us begins. In the language of psychology we explain it by the law of mental suggestion. The late Doctor Bosworth of Oberlin once said that we could explain any reply to prayer "provided we believe that it is possible for God to put a thought into the heart of man." Out from the depths of our unconscious life, back of our conscious thought, come memories. If we are in expectant prayer, the Spirit of God brings to our remembrance something that is God's inspiration and purpose for us. Out of the mass of impressions, previous experiences, and unrealized potentialities, with unerring wisdom God's Spirit selects that which is His word for us that day. If we have enriched our sub-conscious life by absorbing what is true, pure, and honest in thought, we store up larger resources which God can use for our need. Jesus said of

the Spirit, "He will draw upon what is mine and disclose it to you," and again, "He will teach you everything and recall to you everything I have said." Whether it be guidance, comfort, cleansing, or inspiration, out of the silence it will come.

There are three special gifts that come to all who pray thus, and they are essential for every life. The first is discernment—that inner wisdom and intuition by which we get a true perspective, and see things as they are through the glass of God's purity. So much of our vision is out of focus through moral astigmatism, or distorted by pull of conflicting elements, that our judgment is blinded. Prayer helps us to discern truly and act with true wisdom.

The second reward of prayer is an increase of unselfish love which shows us clearly the path of service. Thousands of Christians have no sense of vocation for the realizing of God's purpose for them because the love of God has never fully possessed them. Their one aim is to get wisdom for their own desires and plans. How much time we lose in disappointing living because we do not follow these laws of prayer.

The third gift is a priceless freedom. This means a release from the pull of lower desires and a power to adventure with God victoriously. To be free from the burden of sin, to see the path of life, to know that we can do all things

through Him who strengthens us, sends us to bed to sleep like babes, and gives elasticity to our step. These three gifts alone are worth the discipline of daily prayer.

Prayer shows us so clearly God's purpose for us that we can do our utmost to carry it out, working together with Him. Prayer does not relieve us from responsibility but calls us to the right path and purpose. Along the way we may come to humanly impossible conditions. We may see a stone wall blocking our path. When we reach it, at that moment a miracle can happen by laws which are unknown to us—God opens a way before us which humbles us in awe and thanksgiving. Countless Christians can testify to this. More of us would have this experience if we were utterly faithful to what we can do, and walked in childlike trust up to the impossible, knowing that God does beyond what we ask or think in order that nothing shall baffle His purpose for us. The old Hebrew prophets knew this when they discerned God's word in their heart and proved it in experience: "I myself will go before you, levelling the mountains; I will shatter doors of bronze and cut through iron bars; I will give you hidden treasures."

One question rises naturally. If self-forgetting love is the spirit in which we tune in with the heart and power of God, is it ever right to pray for our own needs? Yes, one may. But

the test of all we ask for ourselves has to do with the purpose back of it. We may ask for anything *in order that* we may be better able to work out God's purpose for us. Anything that will help us to be our best for Him is a part of His purpose for us. In the Epistle of James, he says, "You miss what you want because you do not ask God for it; you do ask and you do not get it, because you ask with the wicked intention of spending it on your pleasures" (James 4:3). If our prayer is merely for our own pleasure, or to relieve us of all effort, or to have unfair advantage of another, we are met only by silence. It is only as we are one with the Divine purpose for us that we may ask anything for ourselves; that the loving purpose may be more fully carried out.

One of the great uses of prayer is the ministry of intercession. Through it our love directs spiritual energy to bless others. There are many who feel that prayer for others is unnecessary because God, who loves them, will do what is needed without our asking. But this does not touch the heart of the situation. It is God's plan that each of us is part of a triangle of relationships: God, man, and the other man. Our fulness of life depends upon our relation to God and to others. Our highest destiny is bound up with God and our fellow-men. The same love must bind us together. Where there

is unselfish love, there is always loving solicitude, yearning, and prayer for blessing on those we love. Without this intercession there could be no love. Through intercession we strengthen the habit of self-forgetting love. We also become channels for the power of God to flow through us into others. What courage and strength and peace comes from our friends whose very presence and attitude of spirit reinforces our drooping spirit. The most precious uses of friendship are bound up with our influence over one another—when that influence is unselfish. Intercession unites our love with God's love for the blessing of others, and poor indeed is that spirit which is deprived of a friend who prays.

There are many people who are more responsive to us than they are to God. If our love for them is linked to God's power through prayer, we can increase the God consciousness within them and influence them to a closer union with Him, where all their need will be met. Jesus emphasized the value of intercession again and again, bidding us pray for our enemies; telling His disciple Peter, who was to be tempted by evil urges, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Just before his crucifixion Jesus prayed intensely for the disciples, and the writer to the Hebrews speaks of Him as "ever living to make intercession for us." This service is

evidently the highest we can render through love. It is the proof of its reality. St. Paul, in writing to Timothy who was to succeed him, says, "My very first counsel is that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings, are to be offered for all men . . . it is good to pray thus, it is acceptable to our Saviour, to the God who desires all men to be saved and to attain the knowledge of the Truth" (I Tim. 2: 1–4). Our lives are all knit together. Unselfish love cannot resist the urge to crown the life of others with highest good, any more than the sun can refuse its healing vitality to the just and unjust.

To all of us who believe in Jesus' word about the reality of eternal life, intercession is the one way in which we can still touch the life of those who have passed beyond our human sight. On the sea, or at the ends of the earth, or in other parts of the universe, we can touch them by the wave-length of selfless prayer. It helps to keep alive in us the continuity of life.

"How can I cease to pray for thee? somewhere
In God's wide universe thou art to-day.
Can He not reach thee with His tender care?
Can He not hear me when I for thee pray?
Somewhere thou livest and hath need of Him.
Somewhere thy soul sees higher heights to climb,
And somewhere too, there may be valleys dim,
Which thou must pass to reach the heights sublime.

Then all the more because thou canst not hear
Poor human words of blessing, will I pray.
O true brave heart, God bless thee where soe'er
In God's wide universe thou art to-day."

There are other great realities to be found at times when we have prayer fellowship with others. Each takes from the others and each gives to the others. Thus when a group of like-minded people come together for the common purpose of intercession, something far more significant than an individual experience results. As has been already quoted, our Lord made a sweeping promise full of all possibilities to the two or three who met together in His name. He promised His presence among them and said that whatever they asked would be granted. We have never plumbed the depths of this possible human experience. Only God knows what we are missing by failing to enter into this great spiritual adventure.

One of the saddest failures of the disciples to respond to the call of love from their Lord was that night in the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was facing the cross and its suffering. He said to his three closest friends, "My heart is sad, sad even to death; stay here and watch with me." But they went to sleep while their Lord prayed. And He said, "So the three of you could not watch with Me for a single

hour?" To fail our friends when they need us in intercession is to withhold a strength that could enable them to go through deep waters victoriously. Fellowship is one of the greatest gifts we can give our friends. We may not have wealth or wisdom but at least we can be the medium for the release of God's power. It may be a silent fellowship of sympathy and love. W. B. Yeats writes: "We can make our minds so like still water that beings gather about us that they may see, it may be, their own images, and so live for a moment with a clearer, perhaps even with a fiercer life because of our quiet." It is through these laws of fellowship, which we dimly understand but know are potent, that we can bring some of the greatest gifts to those we love.

There are three practical difficulties that hinder many from entering deeply into a prayer experience. The first is the feeling many have that the only use of prayer is the reflex influence on ourselves. The quiet, the aspiration, the detachment from self explain the peace that comes from prayer, rather than any actual meeting of the soul with God. Experience shows that those who hold this theory do not spend much time in prayer for the sake of the reflex influence. They talk more than they practice. There is also a principle which works in them and in others. It is not possible to project

one's spirit continually to what is unresponsive. We do not pursue human beings who never respond to our advances. That which keeps life and growth in friendship is its constant give and take. To come with trust and faith in a Father of love who never reveals Himself to us would soon put the trust and faith to death. The reflex influence of prayer is real in its effect on us; but it is far more than that for the one whose daily habit is prayer.

Others quote a phrase of our Lord which releases us, so they say, from the need for prayer. When He was telling His disciples to cast away the spirit of anxiety about what they should eat, drink, or wear, He said "Do not be troubled . . . your heavenly Father knows quite well you need all that." This is one of the blessed realities when God is our Father, but it does not release us from working together with Him for the meeting of our need. A baby is fed by its mother without any responsibility on its part; but how disappointed a parent would be if after a few years the child never ran into the house calling out in its hunger, "Please give me something to eat." God expects us to add our effort to what He supplies. A human father may long to give his child an education, but he cannot do it unless the child is willing to reach out for it and study and work for it. There are countless gifts our Father in heaven has for us,

but they can never be ours until we reach out for them in prayer and willingness to do our part. We are not puppets, but free spirits, growing up into maturity. Co-operation with our Father of love is the price we must pay.

All this may be true, but some of us are so prone to think of the universe as a vast mechanism where everything works according to law. We do not see how God can interfere with His laws to answer our prayers. It is true that God's methods are orderly processes, but the process does not thwart His personal sovereignty. By laws that are unknown to us, our special needs can be supplied. By the laws of memory and intuition, we can make discoveries that show how our prayers can be answered. The rules of our households do not prevent our meeting the unusual needs of our children, and surely God is far more resourceful than we are. The cosmos does not hinder His freedom—but aids it. Everything that we need to carry out His purpose is available for us somewhere in the universe. God can transcend nature by the laws of His personality without turning the cosmos into chaos.

It is worth while to study the prayer expression of the men of old who dared great things for God. As we read them in the Psalms, or Prophets, and in the experience of the disciples of Jesus, we begin to realize the breadth

of faith which came to them through their prayer experience. We cannot afford to miss this in our own life. More and more in this world of confusion, strain, and chaos of thought, one wonders how any one can keep his sanity without having as an intimate lover of his soul the God who made him. He is our refuge and strength; we shall find Him very near. There is no way in which we can so perfectly and easily integrate ourselves and all our aspirations around God as through prayer. There is nothing mechanical about it. We turn to Him simply, naturally, and trustfully, and find new poise, new purpose and courage, which takes away all fear and loneliness. As King David sang long ago:

> "My safety and my honor rest on God
> God is my strong rock and refuge.
> Always rely on Him, my followers,
> Pour out your prayers to Him;
> God is a refuge for us."

There are some for whom prayer has meant nothing more than pouring out petitions. They have never paid the price of entering into their inner room and shutting the door, as Jesus told us to do whenever we prayed. Prayer is one-tenth speaking and nine-tenths listening for the inner voice of the Spirit. The inner room is the school for our soul where we see God, ourselves,

His purpose, and His wisdom. We dare not neglect the school of prayer. Through it our spirit grows to maturity, and we develop the powers that enable us to live by spiritual laws which will fit us for the world to come. Let us begin now, and following the example of Jesus ask, as the disciple did, "Lord teach us to pray.

Lord what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence can avail to make.
What heavy burdens from our bosom take.
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower.
We kneel and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all the distant, and the near,
Stand forth in sunny outline brave and clear.
We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power.
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak or heartless be
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee."

ARCHBISHOP TRENT.

XII

"Come, you whom my Father has blessed, come into your inheritance in the realm prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you entertained me,
I was unclothed and you clothed me,
I was ill and you looked after me,
I was in prison and you visited me.

Then the just will answer,

Lord, when did we see you hungry and fed you? or thirsty and gave you drink?
when did we see you a stranger and entertain you? or unclothed and clothed you?
when did we see you ill or in prison and visit you?

The King will answer them, 'I tell you truly, in so far as you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even to the least of them, you did it to me.'"

WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER XII

THE LABORATORY OF THE SONS OF GOD

It is a serious matter to enter into conscious relation with the living God our Father. It will lead us into a career like unto that of Jesus Christ. There is no escape from it. When Jesus said to the people, "Truly, truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life within you," it forced their thinking to the real issue. He went on to explain more in detail: "Just as the living Father sent me and I live by the Father, so he who feeds on me will also live by me. Such is the bread which has come down from heaven: your ancestors ate their bread and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever" (John 6:52–58).

The inevitable result was that many of those who were attracted to Jesus drew back and would not associate with Him any longer. There is an infinite pathos in the way Jesus turns to His disciples and asks, "You do not want to go, too?" Peter faces the inevitable hopelessness of escape with the question, "Lord, who are we to go to? You have got words of eternal life,

and we believe, we are certain, that you are the holy One of God" (John 6:68, 69).

There is no other way. If we are to follow Jesus' way of life we shall find at the heart of this career the working law of sacrificial love: death to self to release love for God and for others. Jesus summed up all the requirements of God in these words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "On these two commandments," He said, "the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." Only two things are of any importance—God, and others. We, like Jesus, are destined to be Sons of God: revealers of the life and power of God. This becomes our real career, and our imagination can never picture all that this may involve.

What could be more wonderful than to be the means whereby some word of God can become articulate in this world! The heart of God must become flesh and dwell among us or the world can never see His glory. How can we know the purposes of electricity unless it becomes embodied in some mechanical body and shows us its character through the light or heat or motion which it reveals? The world has all sorts of subjective theories about God, as it used to have about electricity; but when it looks at Jesus Christ it sees embodied in His life the

very life of God. Jesus said, "As the Father sent me even so send I you," thereby holding out to each one of us the possibility of making the word of God articulate to our generation and showing others what God is really like. An old translation of some of St. Paul's words to the Corinthians makes this vividly real: "God was in Christ wooing the friendship of the world unto Himself and hath entrusted to us the service of making friends for Him." We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating through us, "We beseech you on behalf of Christ, become ye friends in the God." Now one of the remarkable facts about wooing friendship is that it is a career possible for everyone. Even a baby can express love; old men and maidens, the wise and ignorant, all can break down barriers by an unselfish love which thinks of others rather than self. No one is excluded from this opportunity to reveal the very heart of God.

This service becomes all the more important because there are many people in this world more accessible to us than they are to God. Often the door of the human heart is closed to God but open to us. This fact has an important bearing upon our friendships. How many times the spirit of God is longing to get into the heart of some whom we call friends. We know this and yet are not willing to let God speak through

us, or live through us down to our finger tips. If we win friends for ourselves and do not include Him in these relationships, we may be sure that we have not yet broken with the selfish principle. To sit around a warm hearthfire in the joy of human fellowship and leave our Christ outside is one of the sure signs that we are not in complete union with Him. We delight to introduce our honored guests to our friends; why not be as simple and natural with our best Friend. What more glorious words could be said of anyone than were uttered by Mrs. Browning about this life of friendship:

"You showed me something separate from yourself,
Beyond you, and I bore to take it in
And let it draw me. You have shown me truths
O June day friend, that help me now at night
When June is over. Truths not yours indeed
But set within my reach by means of you,
Presented by your voice and verse
The way to take them clearest."

From the earliest days of the Christian era the world recognized the followers of the Christ by their friendship for one another. In his book, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity,* Doctor Harnack writes of the early Christians: "One thing was plain, however, even to the dimmest vision and the most determined dislike. And that was the strong and even unex-

ampled fellow-feeling which held these guilds together and animated their members. . . . They have all things in common . . . they make light of any expense whatever in their mutual services . . . they treat each other as brothers and sisters—such were the opinions of their conduct to be heard all over the empire. And these opinions corresponded to the self-consciousness of the people to whom they applied. Deep into their souls the conviction had sunk that their whole course of life must be regulated by the limitless duty of love, especially toward those who shared their faith, and also that they were to stand toward one another in the capacity of friends."

It was because of this quality of unselfish devotion that the dominance of the Christian faith increased so rapidly. The spirit of friendship deepened into that close and warm relation of brotherhood. Harnack goes on to say: "The name of 'brethren' alone seemed to express what Christians were and were to be. In primitive Christianity 'brother' could not leave any room for 'friend,' so powerful was their consciousness of the spiritual unity in their position, so absorbing was their sense of mutual responsibility." History shows that these terms of "friend" and "brother" fell into gradual disuse as early as the third century A. D. and soon came to be associated only with the clergy, as

they are to this day. Because of this the world to-day finds it difficult to believe that the Church, and Christians as a whole, are really devoted to Jesus Christ in reality of spirit. Because we no longer make friendship and brotherhood the dominating law of our life, we hide Christ from those who would find Him irresistible if they could disconnect Him from us. Perhaps even now someone is reading these lines, yearning to know the truth about God, and has been repelled from an intensive study of the life of Christ because of his hatred of Christians he has known. If we have shown you a caricature and not the real character of Christ, go directly to Him in spite of us and, forgetting the crudeness of our attempt to reveal His beauty, discover for yourself His laws of the spiritual life. Read His words, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you," and then quietly go forth to live the life of love as He lived it and help to rekindle the flame of brotherhood which alone can roll this world into light. As Ernest Crosby well says:

"No one could tell me where my soul might be;
I sought for God, but God eluded me.
I sought my brother out and found all three,
My God, myself, and all humanity."

How shall we begin and where? What are

the marks of the friendly spirit? It is created by certain attitudes of mind. Chief among them is one which will lead us out of the provincial into the cosmopolitan life. It is a simple principle—to consider every human being a person and not a thing. The sin of the impersonal is responsible for much of the evil in the world. Great social unrest is caused by it. In the industrial word the influential capitalist has too often regarded the workers as mere "hands" by which his personal gain may be secured. In domestic life the servant is often merely a cog in the household machinery, rather than a human being. Government officials regard the people too often as "masses" to be swayed by their strategy or exploited for graft. When we come to races the situation is even more difficult. In every part of the world there is some depressed race which is looked down upon by the ruling race. Often someone of a different color or nationality never registers in our consciousness as a person. The well-dressed folk ignore those in poor garments; the rich despise the poor, and the poor despise the rich. Wars and uprisings follow in the wake of these antagonisms, because we forget that we are all children of one Father. The social evil which blights so many lives is due to men regarding women as things, or women regarding men as physical prey. In the life of the best of us there is need for a new

point of view. It is a thrilling adventure for anyone who dares to make this simple adjustment and commits himself to a life of human relations in every walk of life.

If we face facts honestly, most of us, even the spiritually minded, prefer to escape human relations as far as possible. Most religious leaders prefer to work impersonally. They would rather speak to a multitude en masse, retire to a convent, work through an impersonal committee, or commit the actual dealing with individuals to their subordinates, or write a pamphlet to express their ideals. They are unwilling to use their vital energy in laying their lives alongside the needs of others. But this is not true of religious folk alone. In the business world the tendency to remove oneself from personal, human relations is equally strong. The owner rarely mingles with the needs of his men; teachers oftentimes scarcely know the personal life of their students; rulers rarely understand the real desires of their people. In short, as human individuality and power increase, the trend away from personal relations toward lofty isolation is the natural desire. Nothing shows the wide difference between the sons of men and the Son of God more than the fact that He is always "touched by the feeling of our infirmities," as the writer of the Hebrews puts it, whereas we instinctively shrink from them.

And yet the need is there. As Thomas Curtis Clark puts it:

> "The touch of human hands—
> Not vain, unthinking words,
> Not that cold charity
> Which stuns our misery;
> We seek a loyal friend
> Who understands,
> And the warmth, the pulsing warmth
> Of human hands."

All of this is possible only when we are literally possessed by the spirit of love as Jesus commanded, "As I have loved you, you are to love one another." "But how can we love those we do not like?" asks someone. "Love rises to meet what is lovable; how can we love someone who is not lovable?" Jesus suggests two ways in which we can obey His commandments. One is His teaching in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, where He speaks about the day when He will separate people into two groups according to their dominant spirit. He says in that day He will say to one group: "Come into your inheritance in the realm prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you entertained me, I was unclothed and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you visited me." The people are surprised at

His words and ask, "When did we see you hungry and fed you? or thirsty and gave you drink?" Then the answer comes, "I tell you truly, in so far as you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even to the least of them, *you did it to me.*" Herein is the secret of seeing the lovable underneath the unlovable. In so many lives the life of God is imprisoned. The Spirit of Christ yearns to be released in that life. Canon Barnett, who had so much experience with the poor of London, writes: "In our dealings with individuals, we should remember more consciously their ideal selves—the Christ in them. . . . Few realize that in the individual there is a buried life, a life which can think and love, and that the only end worth achieving is the release of this life from beneath its load of selfish, mean cares. . . . If we would remember the Christ which is in all men, the memory would largely affect our dealings with them. Respect for others implies taking them at God's valuation, and they who see others as God sees them, speak of them and to them in a different language. . . . The self which aspires, loves, and thinks, though it is hidden, is the real self of each one of us." The love of God can become articulate only as it expresses itself through the touch of our hands, through the loving way we meet the conscious needs. It is felt through the cup of cold water, the hospital-

ity, the sheltering protection of brotherliness. Prejudice, bitterness, strife and hatred melt away before its warmth, and the Christ is released. Because we love our Christ we are eager to help Him transform unloveliness into the radiant beauty of His presence. It is impossible to stand idly by, or ignore human needs if we really care about what is dear to His heart.

The other answer to our question about the limitation of love was given to the disciples in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew's gospel when Peter wondered whether seven times was the limit for forgiving the fault of a brother. Jesus told the story of a man who had been freed from a great debt of three million pounds through the generosity of a creditor and then found a man who owed him twenty pounds and mercilessly had him thrown into prison till he should pay his debt. Then comes the question, "Ought you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had on you?" Who is there among us who is not deeply conscious of how much we owe to all those influences in our lives which released the Spirit of Christ within, which shines forth in lovable glints of glory. We owe so much to all those friends who helped us that the least we can do is to do our utmost for others. We may well fare forth in faith knowing that God will be able to do far beyond what we can ask or think provided His forgiv-

ing, yearning love flows on unhindered through us. Do you want to test the reality of the transforming power of the Spirit of God? Begin to-day to love the unlovable in a confident expectation that the miracle of release will come. There is nothing which will banish monotony and bring more thrills of joy into our day's work than experiences like this.

There is another side to this career of the sons of God. The mediation of the life of God must not only transform the individual life, but society as well. One coal of fire can light another, but a group of coals can warm a whole house or start a conflagration. The power becomes more than the sum of the individual coals; it releases limitless power through the union of all the forces. It is the same law that operates in unity of intercession as we had it illustrated in the preceding chapter.

It is difficult for many religiously minded people to feel the importance of helping to remake the existing social order. Our days on earth seem so short that many people hesitate to "waste time" on what seems to be of secondary importance. To give every individual the chance for the new birth as a child of God is such a vast enterprise that there is no time for anything else. Some people, dismayed by the gigantic and humanly impossible task, interpret some of the words of Jesus to mean that the

world cannot be changed in its social order until He comes in power and glory to usher in a new era. They also hesitate lest they become involved with the world instead of being separate from it. They are fearful lest the heavenly life may become contaminated with earthly experience. This fear leads them to turn away from contemplating the human life of Jesus lest the power of the Christ be lessened.

Is it not at this point that the glory of the Christ is most apparent? It is the miracle of the Christ that gives us a rational faith that we too may become sons of God. What we call heaven and earth are both parts of God's universe. Earth is merely that part of God's universe which is our present experience: the realm of our present service. To that service we bring the current of the heavenly powers. We are to be faithful in that which is least—our tiny earth —in order to prove our fitness to be trusted with that which is greatest, namely, the heavenly realms beyond. It is indeed a reasonable question which the youth of the world are asking, "If the power of Christ is not adequate to transform this world, how can we be sure that He is adequate for other realms?"

The whole task of social redemption is a challenge to the reality of our Christ-given purpose. When He taught us to pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," did He not lay upon

us the task of working together with Him that this prayer should be answered? How can we ignore this teaching and yet claim to be honest in our purpose to follow Jesus Christ? If someone were to suggest that our social indolence is due to our dislike of hard work and a possible cross whereon the forces of selfish greed might crucify us, would there be any real truth in it?

How can we explain the slowness with which the good news about what our Christ can do for every human being is realized here on earth? Is it not because there are thousands of people who find it impossible to believe in a God of love because of present social conditions? There are countless little children who have no chance for anything but animal instincts to develop in them because of a sordid environment, which could be removed if we honestly wanted to help. The rebellion, hatred, and atheism of countless people is due largely to the fact that the ruling classes who claim spiritual ideals are so indifferent to their welfare. "If any man would come after me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." The common mistake people make is to assume that prosperity is the chief sign of God's love. Therefore, when wealth comes people assume it is theirs by Divine approval and do not deny themselves for the sake of others. On the other hand, when people are faced with poverty they

assume that God does not care for them and become bitter. What our heavenly Father wants is that His children have brotherly love each for the other and win spiritual greatness by a self-abandoning love for Him, which rises above the temptations of riches or poverty and counts spiritual treasures the only true riches. But the spirit of brotherhood must reign alike in the hearts of rich and poor and we shall be held accountable for the way in which we use the earthly resources to produce spiritual dividends. It is really the insincerity of the brother spirit that is such a stumbling-block to the mass of people.

The natural question rises, "How am I to find time for this service of brotherhood when life is so taken up with the problems of getting a livelihood?" It is at this point where the East has so much to teach the West. In the West, time is like gold to be conserved at every turn. In the East, time is far less important than living as one goes along. There is a rule which might guide us in the use of our time. Do no more than you can do with the touch of your spirit. In other words, let every human contact be a contact of spirit. It is the way our Lord lived His days. Every one He touched felt the thrill of a new life. With us it is different. We mingle with people mechanically and come away fatigued by the mere jostle with

humanity and there is nothing to show for it at the end of the day. We have "done" certain things but the heart is not expanded with love and brotherliness. The Oriental understands the secret of living far better because with him a business transaction is a social experience in which friendship can grow. He can better understand the way of Jesus. We in the West will never know the fulness of life until we dare to make the radical change in our way of living that will free us from the haste that makes us blind to the finest values in our environment.

"Do you want to know what kept me straight in France during those war years?" asked a man. "When Dad came to New York to say good-by to me before I sailed, he was so moved he could not speak, but put his hand on my shoulder and then turned away. Over in France wherever I went I never lost the feeling of Dad's hand on my shoulder. It kept me straight." Why was it that a mere touch of a hand on the shoulder had such power? Because through that human hand there thrilled the love of a father for his boy. Many others touched him and were forgotten; the touch of love was an abiding influence.

What joy and triumph we could bring into our lives if we touched only with the touch of brotherhood. In readjusting our daily life let us do only as much as we can do with the glow

of a friendly spirit. Some days we have more vitality than on others. The real test is not how much we do but how vitally we touch the life of others. It spells the difference between an experience of depressing monotony and boredom and a life that grows increasingly joyous and radiant in spite of passing years. James Russell Lowell puts the truth of the unspiritual life in never-to-be-forgotten words:

"They pass me by like shadows, crowds on crowds,
Dim ghosts of men that hover to and fro,
Hugging their bodies round them like their shrouds,
Wherein their souls were buried long ago:
They trampled on their youth, and faith, and love,
They cast their hope of human kind away,
With Heaven's clear messages they madly strove,
And conquered—and their spirits turned to clay."

One comprehending look into the faces of a group of average people ought to be warning enough to send us to our knees in prayer, that we may have the courage to begin now to live the life of Jesus and that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us, and the work of our hands be established.

XIII

"God has made us what we are, creating us in Christ Jesus for the good deeds which are prepared beforehand by God as our sphere of action."

FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS.

"Do your utmost to let God see that you at least are a sound workman, with no need to be ashamed of the way you handle the word of the Truth."

FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO ST. TIMOTHY.

"Work all the more strenuously at your salvation with reverence and trembling, for it is God who in his goodwill enables you to will this and to achieve it."

FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

"Ye spread and span
Like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain,
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain."

SIDNEY LANIER.

CHAPTER XIII

CREATIVE LIVING

The hall-mark which stamps human beings as capable of becoming sons of God is the ability to become creators. Many of us wonder why we who are born in perfect helplessness should be sent into a world teeming with irresistible forces which can utterly destroy us. Why did God place us in a world of risks? To some this fact alone gives them the feeling that God is a heartless enemy, and nature malignant toward the life of man. But as our eyes have been opened by Jesus Christ to the amazing love of God, we see why He is so concerned for us. It is because of those latent capacities within us for creative living and for an infinite growth in our power to use and control the forces of this world, and other worlds, for results that are part of the creative purpose of God. In fact, if we so will it, we are workers directed by the central life of the Eternal Mind to bring out the infinite purposes of creation.

The joy and thrill of living to-day centres around the discovery that the ordinary things of life have within them untold and stupendous

possibilities. The craving for knowledge, the spirit of service and love for man, and the world of things, has been many a time the key unlocking hidden secrets that bless our lives. Professor Carver, a negro, whose love for God has made him long to help his people, has discovered in his laboratory scores of commercial uses for the peanut and sweet potato. Hidden within those articles of daily food are elements that enrich life and bring into the service of the world assets that were hitherto unapprehended. They could be revealed only by the co-operation of man's brain and hands in the active effort toward discovery. God has created vast resources within the storehouse of the things we handle, waiting for us to unlock them. Every day the work of discovery goes on, so much so that we have become casual toward these "miracles" that have been wrought by the work of man. The whole universe is full of mysteries, and, as St. Paul wrote to the Romans, "Even the creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed."

If our human capacity to create is used without love, we may release untold forces of destruction in the world: if it is controlled by the love of God it will on the contrary release untold blessings. Love therefore is the most important force to be cultivated in the heart of mankind, that its Godlike powers of creative

ability may be used to bless and not to destroy life. Doctor Robert A. Millikan, world-famed physicist, said recently in answer to the charge that this power in man had multiplied the tools of destruction: "Every scientific advance finds ten times as many new, peaceful and constructive uses as it finds destructive ones. Explosives and fertilizers are basically the same, and even explosives find a dozen peaceful uses to one warlike one. Steel does indeed make bayonets, but it also makes plowshares and railroads and automobiles and sewing-machines and threshers and a thousand other things whose uses constitute the strongest existing diverters of human energies from the destructive to the peaceful arts." Therefore the supreme responsibility of those of us who have love for God and man in our hearts is to release through active creative work those possibilities that bless and do not curse the life of the world.

But it is just at this point where we fail God and sin the most against the love that reaches out to bless others. Why is it that we picture heaven as a place where we shall be forever resting from our labors with nothing to do save to sing or play on a harp? Why do we make it our chief aim here to heap up a big enough pile of resources so that we never have to put forth any effort or do any real work? Why do so many of us from our assumed social elevation

look down upon those who work and create from hour to hour, and pity the one who labors? Why do we seek our pleasure in things that require no effort on our part? Is it not because we are blind to the real purpose God had when He sent us here, because we forget that our immortal possibilities are hidden in creative living? Jesus warned us about the truth. He said to the Jews who were critical of Him, "As my Father has continued working to this hour, so I work too" (John 5:17). And later He says, "While daylight lasts we must be busy with the work of God: night comes, when no one can do any work" (John 9:4). And it is not without deep significance that during the thirty years before His public ministry our Lord toiled as a carpenter, doing creative work that gave the oxen more comfortable yokes, and helping to make homes for the humble folk of Nazareth.

Man's happiness is so dependent upon creative living that those who deny the obligation find no meaning in life save boredom, restlessness and the desire to stop living. In these modern days of luxury and soft living people commit suicide to escape the monotony of living or because they hate work and feel that the world owes them an easy living and failed to pay its debt. For both rich and poor the discovery that work links us with the creative powers of God

opens up the only path to joy and happy life. The poet discerned the truth when he wrote:

> "Meseems it renders God great joy to see
> Hands striving after His creatively:
> Yea that He even left a part undone
> That we might finish that by Him begun,
> And help Him with our efforts to erect
> His house; as masons help an architect.
> If this be true that He of us hath need,
> O then are we the sons of God indeed."

The great task before us is to discover the halo that surrounds all honest work. That is what transforms drudgery into buoyant achievement and the sense of freedom. A woman in Eastern Europe was sitting on the floor sewing a long, long seam. A passing tourist pitied her, but noticed that her face wore a smile. "What are you making?" she asked. "My wedding veil," came the reply. The patient sewing of the long seam was not hardship, but joy, when it was symbolic of the promised life of love. In the same way we need to realize that the whole world is the garment of God's love, and as we work on it, the earthly material is transfigured by the consciousness of God's relation to it. To draw a line between what we call secular and spiritual is to break the unity of the universe which God has made. The humblest work may be a point of contact for

heights of spiritual achievement. Just where we are we can begin. We do not have to pull up our stakes and fare forth to unknown places to find a divine vocation. Put the spaciousness of God into the place where you are, and God's love into the things you do, and from this beginning shall flow a fulness of life that will reach to the ends of the earth. The Psalmist pictures the change when God comes into life with the graphic imagery of the desert. "He turns a desert into pools of water, and dry land into fountains where He settles famished folk."

We may well consider some of the priceless values that are ours only through creative living. First comes growth and the development of mind and spirit. One of the pathetic experiences, common in these days, is the vision of adults with well-developed bodies and good health, but shrivelled in mind and darkened in spirit. They are as devoted to the fascinations of things as a small child sitting in the midst of colorful blocks and toys. They are not aware of the great world of realities in which they might grow up to the fulness of their power. They are like the Epicureans who said "Let us eat, drink, and be merry for to-morrow we die." They have no reverence for the human personality and its capacity to go from strength to strength in the conquest of its environment. One sees this often in the life of friendship.

One idles along the way, playing little games while the hours fly by. The other sees the challenging vision of the far horizon, and girds himself and presses on, growing in wisdom and experience each day, stretching toward the mount of conquest, leaving the other miles behind. The opiates of pleasure, comfort, idleness, indifference have drugged thousands into unconsciousness. They have forgotten their high calling in Christ Jesus and buried their talent in the earth unmindful of the day of reckoning that will surely come for each one of us. We might well take at least one day each month for self-examination, and prune the half-dead branches from our life, that our tree may conserve its vitality for growth and abundance of fruit.

Some people say that the Christian faith is not powerful enough to arrest the attention of the world. It is not the weakness of Christianity but our blindness to the truth of what we are and our lack of reverence for personality, which was meant to rise above the animal and to reach out into the spacious dimensions of the universe. Every soul is of great value. Jesus emphasizes this by three stories concerning the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son, and says, "I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over a single sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10). If this be true, then any

help we can give to the least developed life to enable it to see Jesus, the Son of Righteousness, dawning in the darkened heart, will fill us, too, with eternal joy. The richest experience of creative living is to help another to face the waste and wreckage of his life and show him how to build a life that shall endure. We need not dominate others with our will, but we can create a picture of the Christ and the life with Him that will draw others to follow him. Building lives is so much more rewarding than building houses. And yet we can do both at the same time. Our livelihood gives us not only the chance to achieve comfort, beauty, power and peace for ourselves, but for all those with whom we are associated and whose lives we can touch and influence. Their relation with us through our daily contacts and undertakings gives us the chance to make spiritual values real. If we are true to the opportunity our spirit gains strength for the immortal life beyond. The prophet Daniel discerned this when he wrote down the spiritual revelation he received. In it the word came that those who have led many to the true religion shall "shine like the stars forever more" (Daniel 12:3).

The possibility of transmuting earthly material into eternal values is the greatest romance of human life. A handclasp of greeting once changed a bitter spirit into a life of love that

blessed countless people with its ministry. What a loss it might have been to that man if he had been too busy or indifferent to transmit his love to the other man through the grasp of a hand. A woman shared a meal with a poor neighbor, and turned despair into faith. Everything we have and use can be transformed by our spirit into something that adds eternal value to it. St. Paul writes to the Greeks in Corinth: "The foundation is laid, namely, Jesus Christ, and no one can lay any other. On that foundation any one may build gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw, but in every case the nature of his work will come out; . . . the fire will test the work of each. . . . If the structure raised by any man survives, he will be rewarded; if a man's work is burnt up, he will be a loser" (I Cor. 3:11–15). The gold and silver have qualities that resist fire, while the wood and straw disappear. The only qualities that survive are the spiritual values we put into our work.

The joy of achievement is the elixir of life. We live on the strength of it many days. A man who had spent a dozen years in a chemical laboratory in research for something that would bless sick humanity, once stood by a steamer rail looking at a sunset. Turning to a stranger he said, "I would not take all the years of my life or the years of your life for the sheer

ecstasy of the moment when I discovered in my laboratory one of the secrets God had hid in the universe. I have been looking ever since into a glory more beautiful than that sunset." The drudgery of the years was as nothing compared with the joy of a discovery that blessed mankind. This joy is possible for everyone who does creative work. The unbeliever in God stumbles upon treasures in his field of effort and rejoices in his success. But the man who works, conscious of the relation of everything in the universe to a God of love and creative power, finds a joy greater than mere success. A humble dignity of soul comes to him in the realization that he, too, is a son of God and is working together with Him in the world laboratory to carry out His purposes of blessing for all mankind. Many become neurasthenics these days because they repress this capacity for achievement and have no ideal worth struggling for. Thus they become morbidly self-centred. To realize our high calling as workers together with God puts a spring into one's step and joy into the heart.

Work which is done with this consciousness of a relation to God has an eternal value. When John the beloved disciple of Jesus, after a long life of creative living, wrote the revelation he received on Patmos, he said: "I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are

the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth! Even so, it is the voice of the Spirit—resting from their toils; for *what they have done goes with them.*'" The inference of all this is that what we do here is part of our equipment for a life to come beyond this experience on earth. All the disciples of Jesus lived in the joy of this hope, and in the confidence that here we are only beginning an eternal life that has infinite possibilities. The practical value of such a hope lies in the sense of relative values. Our judgment of the importance of what we are doing each day will be measured by the value of each thing in the light of our future life. Things which may seem insignificant to others will take on new significance for us; and some things that the world deems important will not merit our attention.

The largest investment of our time should be in people. Jesus said: "Whoever gives you a cup of water because you belong to Christ, I tell you truly, he shall not miss his reward" (Mark 9:42). Things may dissolve and pass away, but the human spirit has a potential value that is worth all we can do for it. To help a boy or girl to strength and purity of spirit so that it can measure up to the purpose of God, is the most significant far-reaching service we can render.

In these days our educational philosophy em-

phasizes the right of every one to find his self-realization without the guidance of past tradition, and we leave people to struggle on by themselves. In a subtle way we blind ourselves to the realities of Christlike living and service for others. The world now is bent on freedom and we talk glibly of democracy, equal opportunity for all, and the right of every individual to share in wealth and economic privileges. We profess to believe in the social gospel as a cure for all social ills and insist that the individual must be free to develop in accord with his desires. But our love for the others does not mean that we have any idea of denying *ourselves* for the good of others. We all want unlimited freedom and are willing that others should have it unless it inhibits our own power.

This adolescent dash for freedom is so diverting that we do not think things through. We forget that our earth is being more closely knit in its common interests every day and that sooner or later the freedom of some is bound to trample on the freedom of others. We shall then have to choose between personal aggressiveness and the way of life Jesus taught when He said: "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it."

The greatest sphere for creative living is at this point: to begin now to rescue family life from oblivion by planting it in the soil of self-

denying love for the sake of those ideals through which the Fatherhood of God becomes a visible reality. What greater gift could we offer to our children! To be the means of helping some man or woman to become the embodiment of those ideals of unselfish service which might raise up another Abraham Lincoln for a time of national crisis—is there any greater way in which we can serve our nation? To be able to help the mass of groping souls all around us to see the way to endless life through Jesus Christ—is there any other privilege greater or more significant for our own relation to God? There was never a day when the vision of truth that came to Ezekiel was more applicable: "Here is what the Lord, the Eternal says: 'Woe to the shepherds . . . who have fed none but themselves. . . . You have seized the milk, you have clothed yourselves with the wool, you have killed the fatlings, but you have not fed the flock. You never put strength into the weak, you never healed the sickly, you never bandaged the crippled, you never recovered those who had been driven away, you never looked for those who were lost, and you were rough to those who were strong.'" Individual freedom is not enough. We must share the lot of those who need our strength and deny ourselves for their sake. This is the only principle which ensures our creating a life that can never die.

It is in this way that we discern and prove

the cosmic power of the love of God. It is no longer a theory, but the only philosophy for life that means perfect self-realization for all. It is not a popular programme that dazzles the crowds who are seeking the consummation of all their desires. It seems to lead in an opposite direction. It is as Jesus said, "The road that leads to life is both narrow and close and there are few that find it." We may well pause in silence before the terrible significance of those words. Perchance those who miss the road of life through their desire to go with the crowd may have to wander on for generations in mortal struggle until they see the utter futility of everything that denies the teaching of Jesus Christ.

An idea is a dynamic thing. It is more compelling than force if it is linked with a life that embodies it. But it must run through us with its fire as the electric current runs through the slender wire in the bulb. We could create a new earth and a new people if we so burned with the truth about the meaning of life that we kindled other souls. It was our Lord's last challenge to His disciples. They were to go out into the world and teach every creature the good news about Jesus Christ who said, "Full authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth; go and make disciples of all nations." Then all the people will know what life is all

about and, in using the laws of life by which Jesus lived, may achieve immortality. Thus our mortal life may become a stepping stone and not a stumbling block. This is our highest creative work. Who of us does not long to undertake such service? This drew the apostle Paul on to increasing effort, despite colossal difficulties. One feels the complete devotion of his spirit to the cause when he says, "There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ; what is old is gone, the new has come. . . . So I am an envoy for Christ, God appealing by me, as it were—be reconciled to God, I entreat you in behalf of Christ. . . . I appeal to you, too, as a worker with God, do not receive the grace of God in vain" (Cor. 5:17, 20).

Frederic Myers has put this utter commitment of St. Paul into immortal words:

"Oft when the word is on me to deliver
Lifts the illusion and truth lies bare.

. . . . . .

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings;
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented with a show of things.
Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call;
O to save these,—to perish for their saving,
Die for their life; be offered for them all."

XIV

"I am the living bread which has come down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and more, the bread I will give is my flesh, given for the life of the world."

WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST.

"What can ever part us from Christ's love? Can anguish or calamity or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or the sword?

. . . . . .

No, in all this we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am certain neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor powers of the Height or of the Depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to part us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord."

FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER XIV

A REASONABLE HOPE FOR IMMORTALITY

From the beginning of time man has been haunted by this question, "If a human being is the highest achievement of organic life, what of the future?" Many facts in our experience force us to face this question. Mysteries surround us. We do not stand still. Living in a world that is developing and reaching out to new achievement suggests that there must be some purpose in the process which is beyond our sight. On every side we are lured to greater discoveries and larger possibilities. Surely there must be some meaning in it for us.

At the same time we are faced with a depressing fact. We are born helpless babes; it takes at least twenty-one years to bring us to physical and mental maturity where we are able to cope with the conflicting elements in the world we live in. A few years pass and at forty we begin to lose our strength and to deteriorate physically. Some statisticians tell us the average human being dies at fifty-five. And yet at that time the human mind and spirit is ready for its best work. Youthful passions have been conquered, wisdom comes, problems have been

solved, and a richer insight into life has been gained. Just as we are ready to begin our best work, the body fails us and we die. In the light of all the struggle for education and the work to be done, human beings with all their possibilities are meaningless in nature if there is nothing but extinction after a few years. Why create man with all his powers if he is merely as transitory as a flower of the field?

Another fact is important. There is a sense of eternity in the human heart. We have the power to project our thinking into the future and make our decisions to-day with reference to what is to come. We educate ourselves beyond our economic needs. The child studies to-day in the hope of what he can do years ahead. We try to build for permanency. Even business corporations assume obligations that involve the next generation. The thought of the future is ever with us. Why this sense of eternity in man when all other animal life lives for transient desires, unless it is part of the spirit which God breathed into us when He created man. And if we aim for things that endure, why should we think that God is only interested in what is temporal? Sir Oliver Lodge's inference is well worth considering when he says, "I will not believe that it is given to man to have thoughts nobler or loftier than the real truth of things."

As we have seen in the early chapters of this book, the long processes of the ages have been for the purpose of developing a self-conscious humanity—destined for freedom by the capacity within him to gain more and more control over his environment. Professor Simpson says, "With man has come into existence the possibility of a manner of life with survival-value, that as far transcends the life of cunning as the latter transcended or had survival-value over the life of muscular force." It is the mind and spirit of man that dominates and rises to heights infinitely greater than anything attainable in the animal world of force and cunning. Our spirit is always longing to be free from the trammel of earthly limitations. Professor Albert P. Mathews writes: "The goal is liberty. Liberty for what? Is not the answer in every man's conscience? Is it, can it be anything else than the final liberty of the spirit? Liberty for that part of the immortal consciousness of the universe which is imprisoned within us. . . . Evolution is the spirit struggling to throw off the trammels of matter. . . . The goal of evolution—can it be anything else than immortality?" We may well ask why there has been this costly process of the ages to make self-conscious human spirits if we are only to be mocked. Things must be different from what they seem.

In this day when the vastness of the universe

has become a reality and our earth seems so tiny, man has been reduced to a miscroscopic atom in comparison with the infinities of the universe. Sir James Jeans, the great astronomer, humorously observes, "Under the stars, the pomposities of this world seem slightly comic"; and yet he goes on to say, "In terms of space, man and his works are reduced to very minute dimensions, yet in terms of time, the message of astronomy is exceedingly optimistic. . . . As inhabitants of the earth we are living at the very beginning of time. We have come into being in the fresh glory of the dawn, and a day of almost unthinkable length stretches before us with unimaginable opportunities for accomplishment." Tennyson sings,

> "For we are ancients of the earth
> And in the morning of the times."

When we think of God and the infinite love which ever seeks the good of the beloved, we cannot think of extinction or baffled aspirations in the same breath. Life has even now too many possibilities to sink down in defeat. Every great scientific research student, every honest worker, sees infinite possibilities of discovery and creative work far beyond his strength to carry on. Our God who has given us those powers does not mean to tantalize us with dis-

appointment. That is not true love. Doctor Charles R. Brown in his book *Living Again,* says: "The Creator has a way of keeping His word with the best He has awakened in human aspiration. . . . The integrity of the great order which enfolds us is such that it does not send these normal, wide-opened and persistent desires upon fool's errands. It does not permit them to lead men into blind alleys. It does not call them to action only to mock them with cruel disappointment. It holds in reserve the realities which match those needs." Even Cicero, in ancient Rome, after the death of his daughter, felt that love for her could not be temporal. He says: "If I am wrong in this, that I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly delude myself; nor do I desire that this mistake in which I take pleasure should be wrested from me as long as I live; but if I, when dead, shall have no consciousness, as some narrow-minded philosophers imagine, I do not fear lest dead philosophers should ridicule this my delusion."

No, in the light of a God of love we can exclaim with Sir Oliver Lodge, "Nothing is too big to be believed; and nothing is too good to be true." The mere fact that a personality disappears from view does not argue its extinction. If not here, it is somewhere. One of the assurances which astronomers have given us is that the stars in heaven still shine at mid-day

even though we cannot see them for the brightness of the sun. The proof came a few years ago for the first time in two hundred and fifty years, when during the total eclipse of the sun three bright stars shone down upon the busy city streets at high noon. There they were and have been always—beyond our sight. There is a working law for personality, just as there is for every other part of the universe.

There are many people who have been trying to search out proofs of survival after death by research into the realm of the clairvoyant in the hope that some day a John Smith will squeak out the assurance that he is still living in the spirit world. From of old, people in all lands have delved into these mysteries. They say, "If we could find the workable law and have some voice from the future, then we could believe the reality of immortality." In all the uncertainties of research, man forgets that we *have* a Voice from the future: that God has not left us in the dark. This Voice from the future is the voice of Jesus Christ. He is the only one who ever spoke to men from a realm superior to us in powers and achievements—

> "The hopes and fears of all the years
> Are met in Thee to-night."

The Apostle Paul, one of the greatest of Hebrew scholars, well knew how uncertain the

writers of the Old Testament Scriptures were about the possibilities of life after death. Like Egypt and Greece and other parts of the ancient world the hope for immortality ever sprang up in the hearts of men and became part of their faith. But the character of the experiences after death were not particularly as attractive as they were painted. The Hebrews believed that people went down into the earth to some twilight life below where spirits lived a shadowy existence. As the psalm reads: "Death shepherds them unchecked, driving them down to the world below; ere long their form and fashion waste away, and they abide within the world below. . . . Down he goes to where his fathers dwell, who see no light to all Eternity." But there are gleams of light in the faith of men like King David and the later prophets whose belief in the love of God made them sure of a future life of reward for the righteous and justice meted out to the wicked. With all this background of yearning, yet unproved faith in the past, Paul's joy must have been without bounds when shortly before his martyrdom for the cause of Christ, he writes to Timothy of the marvellous grace of God which He "has now revealed in the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has put down death and brought life and immortality to life by the gospel. . . . That is why I am suffering. Still, I am not

ashamed of it; I know whom I have trusted, and I am certain He is able to keep what I have put into His hands till the great Day" (II Tim. 1: 10–12). He recognized Jesus as the authoritative Voice from the future.

In the progressive development of the higher organisms, a biological law has been observed which is of infinite significance for us; namely, that the organism must co-operate in its own development if it is to reach its highest possibilities. We may not sit down supinely and take the future for granted. If we are to achieve a higher life than this we must work with God to this end. And we have no excuse for failure, because in the life of Jesus we see the laws of the life that triumphs over death and lifts us to the plane of likeness to Him. In the human life of Jesus we see the goal of human evolution, the point where a mortal may pass through death to the eternal life of creative achievement. Dean Bennett of Chester Cathedral voices this in speaking of the Christian faith which grew from the life of our Lord: "Christianity just seems to me to be the last, the final stage, as far as this world is concerned, of the age-long process for the making of immortal out of immortable individuals; in other words, for the making of the sons of God. If they are to inherit eternal life, for it they must qualify themselves." We are capable of immortality but it requires

our full co-operation according to the laws of life in Christ Jesus.

When we examine the teaching of Jesus in the light of this glorious destiny certain of His words glow with new light. He recognized a physical and a spiritual world. Physical birth is not enough; there must be also a spiritual birth. Listen once more to the words of Jesus to the great scholar Nicodemus: "Truly, truly I tell you, unless one is born of water *and the Spirit,* he cannot enter God's Realm. What is born of the flesh is flesh: what is born of the Spirit is spirit." As we have seen, the Spirit takes control of our life when we open our hearts in childlike trust and ask our Father for this gift. Peter and the disciples when they were threatened by the Jewish leaders, replied, "One must obey God rather than men. . . . To these facts we bear witness, with the Holy Spirit which God has given to those who obey Him." In other words, we must co-operate with the laws of the spiritual life as well as those of the physical life if we would win its highest rewards.

Because God is Spirit and because the realities of life beyond are in the realm of the Spirit, the proof of immortality cannot be confined to physical laws. We get intimations of what George Meredith calls "the rapture of the forward view," and the logic of human life and

its possibilities point to more life ahead rather than less: but the confident faith in it comes from a trust in Jesus Christ which increases the more we co-operate with Him. The great reality of eternal life centres around the oneness of our spirit with God through love. Even King David was so aware of this that even though the Christ had not come to prove it, he stakes all on the eternal bond of love. He sings, "I keep the Eternal at all times before me: with Him so close I cannot fail. And so my heart and soul rejoice, my body rests secure; for never wilt Thou let me sink to death, nor leave Thy loyal one to the grave; Thou wilt reveal the path to life to the full joy of Thy presence, to the bliss of being close to Thee forever" (Psalm 16:8–11).

It is love that begets life. Our physical bodies were born because of the love of the two parents, and we live because of human love. The response of our spirit in love to the Father of love creates the spiritual child of heavenly birth which has the power to live in the spiritual realm beyond. Therefore, just as humanity is higher than the animal, so the spiritual life in Christ is higher than the human life. Man is the last word in the organic kingdom and a babe in the spiritual kingdom. When we love we count no sacrifice too great for the sake of the loved one. We run to fulfil the slightest wish. Jesus

shows us the possibility of such love, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; remain within my love." And again he says, "I am myself resurrection and life: he who believes in me will live even if he dies, and no one who lives and believes in me will ever die." On another occasion He says to the crowds who press upon Him, "It is the will of my Father that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him should possess eternal life, and that I should raise him up the last day." The poet Tennyson through the sorrow of the parting with his friend, expressed the faith of all of us who believe in Jesus Christ:

"Strong Son of God, Immortal love,
Whom we that have not seen Thy face,
By faith and faith alone embrace;
Believing where we cannot prove.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust,
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die
And Thou hast made him, Thou art just.

Thou seemest human and Divine,
The highest holiest manhood Thou,
Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

In his *Pilgrim's Progress,* Bunyan puts into the life of Christian these words: "I must ven-

ture. To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death and everlasting life beyond it. I will yet go forward." This describes the state of every human being. Some are so bored with this life that they do not want it perpetuated; and others are sceptical about what lies ahead. Of all the possibilities beyond, the most rational hypothesis is based on the character and assurance of Jesus Christ. We do not lose by taking Him at His word, for all the highest moral values of life have come from following the laws of His life. And if our faith in Him is justified in the end, there is no limit to what eternal life can do for us in developing all our powers through love. Why then should we not strive with all our powers to attain that life of the Spirit, and greet with joy the one hope that can explain the struggles of mortal existence. We can use the circumstances of our earthly life to demonstrate the powers of the spirit. Paul's aim might well be ours when he wrote to the Greeks, "I do sigh within this tent of mine with heavy anxiety—not that I want to be stripped, no, but to be under the cover of the other, *to have my mortal element absorbed by life.*"

To the Christian the greatest assurance of eternal life is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His ascension into the heavens. Here some of you may say that the resurrection

cannot be proved scientifically and that Easter Day was an emotional illusion which captured the imagination of the group of unlettered men and women who were sentimental about Jesus. It is in accord with the laws of the spiritual life that the spiritual presence of a living Lord should only have been seen by those who were one with Him in love. Peter explains this to Cornelius when he says of Jesus, "God raised Him up on the third day and allowed Him to be seen not by all the people but by witnesses" (Acts 10:41). Love bridged the gulf between the risen Lord and His human friends. The resurrection cannot be ignored by the world, for the results of the experience of the disciples with their risen Lord have been too prodigious to rest on illusion. Doctor Bowie in his book *The Master* says: "It was this conviction plus its consequences. The conviction alone might have been called illusion; but illusion shows itself to be such because it always crumbles at the touch of life. The real and the unreal for the moment may look alike, but they cannot result alike. It is not illusion but illumination which keeps men walking on a steady road toward increasing mastery of life. It is not fantasy but fact which makes men creators of a new and larger world of fact. And that is what the disciples became. Because of Easter Day, their own inner selves were re-created. Their

inhibitions of fear dropped off like broken chains. They became not only men of faith, but builders of a new fellowship of faith."

It is as Paul wrote, "If Christ did not rise, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. . . . If in this life we have nothing but a mere hope in Christ, we are of all men to be pitied most. But it is not so! Christ did rise from the dead, He was the first to be reaped of those who sleep in death. . . . As all die in Adam, so shall all be made alive *in Christ.*" At this point comes the significant word. The true faith in eternal life is bound up with the life and death of Jesus Christ. At one time some of the Sadducees, who denied any resurrection, came to Jesus to put to Him what they considered a difficult question. It was the projection of earthly experience into the spiritual realm. If a woman had seven husbands in this life, which of them would have her as wife in the next world? The reply of Jesus is worthy of our most earnest thought. He said: "Those who are considered worthy to attain yonder world and the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are married. . . . They are equal to angels and by sharing in the resurrection they are sons of God." There is evidently in the mind of Jesus a condition to be fulfilled before one can attain eternal life. Immortality is a prize to be won. Principal Denny wrote, "In either case,

a share in the Christian resurrection is conditioned by the spirit of Christ." Paul too sums up his famous thesis to the Romans with a big "if." He writes, "*If* the spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells within you, then He who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies live by His indwelling Spirit in your lives." It is like the acorn in which there must be a germ of life or the mighty oak is not possible.

In the light of this glorious truth about Jesus, death is transformed from a black abyss into a gateway to life. Charles Frohman, who was drowned with many others on the ill-fated *Lusitania,* said to one of the survivors: "Why should we fear death? It is life's finest form of adventure." He was right. Death is the greatest adventure from mortal to immortal life which we may meet with perfect trust in the words of Jesus Christ, who said, "Let not your hearts be disquieted; you believe—believe in God and also in me. In my Father's house there are many abodes; were it not so, would I have told you I was going to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, so that you may be where I am" (John 14: 1–3).

Therefore, as Dean Shailer Mathews writes, we Christians have "an adventurous conviction that the experience of Jesus in overcoming

death is an example of the capacity of a newness of life which is possible for anyone who so connects His life with the timeless, personality-producing forces of the universe that is with God, as to be superior to the lower forms of life which men preserve. As Paul said, 'Jesus becomes the first fruits of a mighty harvest.' For if the spirit of God, which raised Him from the dead, dwell in us, we, too, may look forward to new stages of individual development, that are no more mysterious than those which our present personal life has evolved from those electrons and protons beyond which our understanding of the universe cannot yet proceed." Thus we can walk steadily onward if we are denying self and following the law of love in Christ which is greater than faith or hope. By love we conquer the powers of evil and crown mortality with eternal life. The thought of renewing our friendships with our loved ones gone on before us and the joy of working at the spacious tasks of a universe with Jesus Christ, and going on from glory to glory in achievement, ought to nerve us to wrest from this life all possible training for the life to come.

After each night in which we are lured on by stars of promise comes the glory of the dawn and the Eastern sun. So let us quietly trust and watch for the dawning of our eternal day of life.

"Eastward, ever Eastward,
Dark or light the way,
Pressing toward the promise,
We salute the day.
O'er the mountains yonder
Shines the Orient gleam,
Yonder sweetest voices
Call across the stream.
Eastward ever Eastward,
Dark or light the way,
Pressing toward the promise,
We salute the day.

Oh, the end of patience,
And the close of strife;
Oh, the joy of morning,
And the gift of life!
Oh, the grace, the glory,
Of the great reward!
Oh, the blessed Vision,
Jesus Christ our Lord!
Eastward, ever Eastward,
Dark or light the way,
Pressing toward the promise,
We salute the day."

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